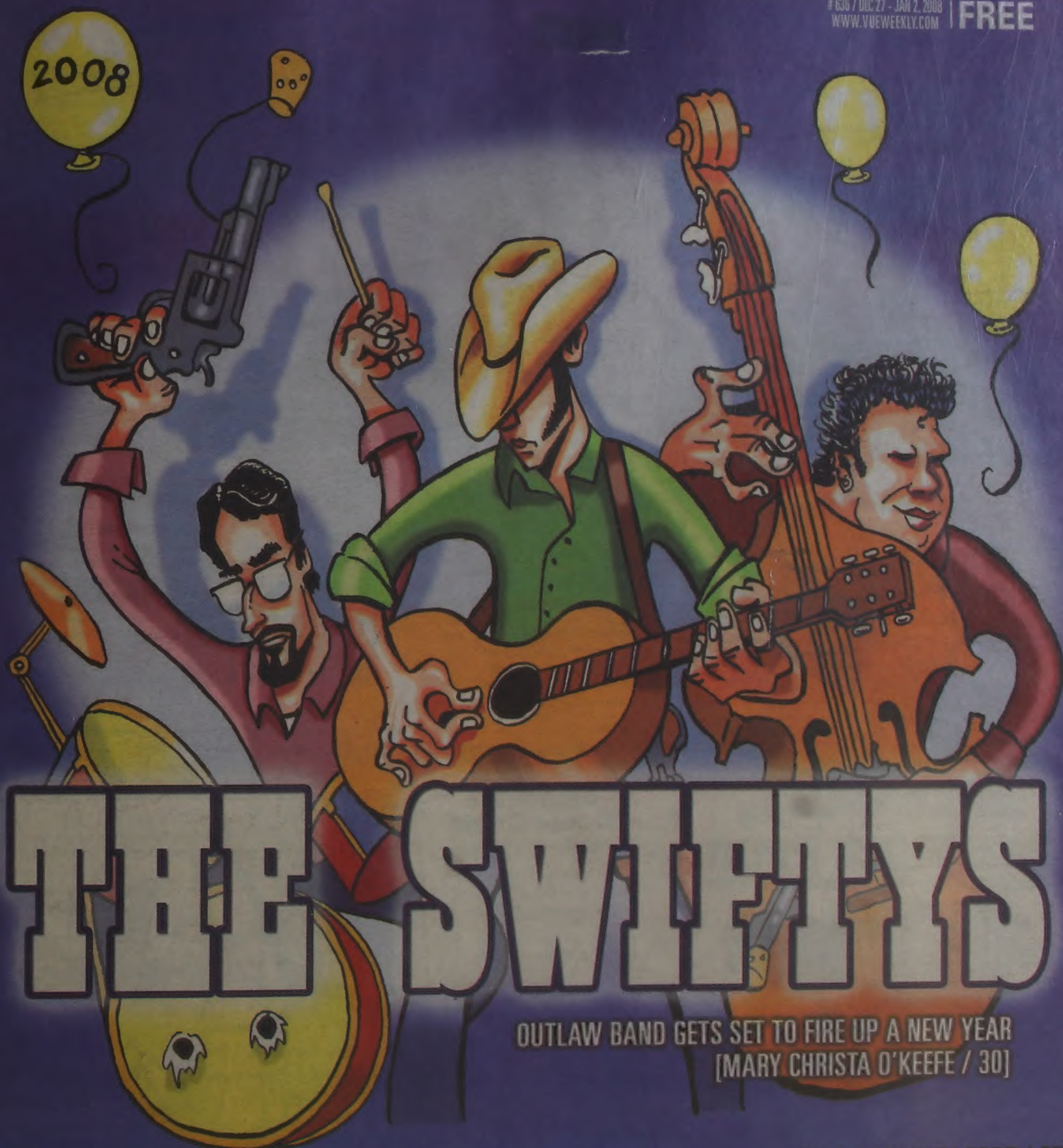


EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

# VUEWEEKLY

# 636 / DEC 27 - JAN 2, 2008 | FREE  
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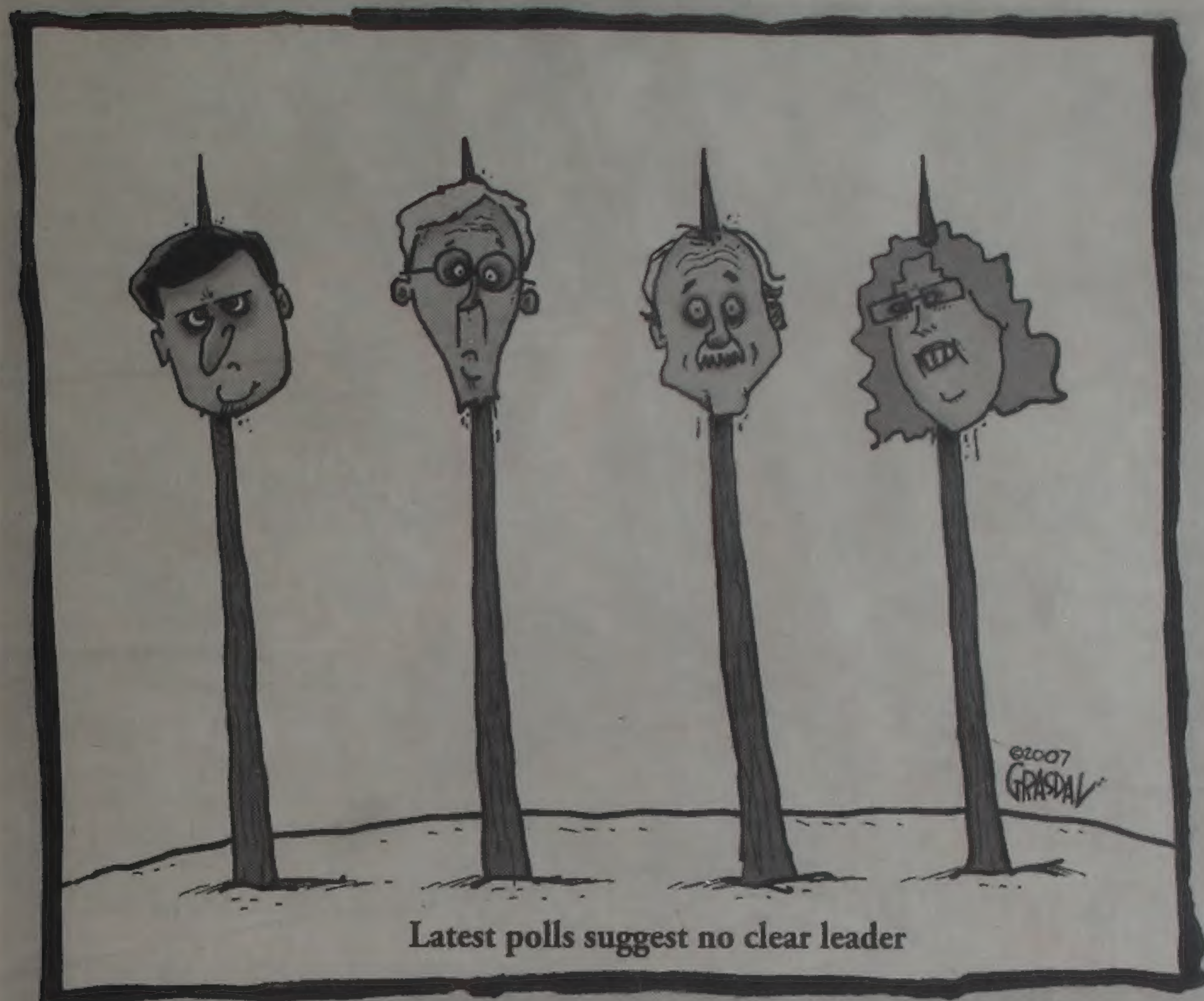
OUTLAW BAND GETS SET TO FIRE UP A NEW YEAR  
[MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / 30]

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ARTS: VAUDEVILLIAN NYE / 22

FILM: SWEENEY TODD / 27





Latest polls suggest no clear leader

## MAIL LETTERS

## CARLOS GETS MORE MAIL!

Someone forwarded me the letter from Carlos Alexandre to *Vue Weekly* (Letters, Nov 29 - Dec 5, 2007). I was surprised you use medical bunk to describe Complementary and Alternative Medicine. From your letter, we can see you are not only narrow-minded, but also science blinded.

Acupuncture has more than 5000 years of history. It saves and helps millions of people all over the world, from arthritis, facial paralysis, to stroke and sports injuries. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended 100 kinds of diseases can be helped by acupuncture (who.int). Extensive research has shown acupuncture works through brain, spine and organ/tissue levels. B-endorphine, NA, 5-HT, ACTH have been regulated by acupuncture to help patients cope with pain, stress and inflammation. In 1997, the US National Institute of Health (NIH) consensus development conference gathered top researchers in the world to study acupuncture, and the panel concluded that "there is sufficient evidence of acupuncture's value to expand its use into conventional medicine." NIH set up a special office for CAM

research, with \$70 million funding available every year. Eighteen research centres have been established in United States. It has been estimated that by 1993 over 15 million Americans had experienced acupuncture treatment. Seventy-nine per cent of the GPs in England agreed that they would like to see acupuncture available on the NHS. Recent research from Germany shows that acupuncture is twice as effective as conventional medicine in treating chronic low back pain.

If alternative medicine is just a "placebo effect," could you conclude that conventional medicine is even worse than the placebo effect? From medical history, we know early surgeries killed more people than it saved because of blood transfusions. But no one called it "scientifically unproven and dangerous" surgery, and continued to develop the technique until it began to save more people. Nothing is perfect, and I admit there are some things incorrect in CAM, just like conventional medicine. That is why all science needs to continue developing.

I wish you would research more on the topic before you make any comments on such a serious issue. The internet is not a research paper, and you should not cite bunk websites. For medical research, you should go on Medline or Pubmed.

JIULIN WANG, R.Ac  
ACUPUNCTURE PROGRAM  
GRANT MACEWAN COLLEGE

## MULTIPLE FORMS OF ABUSE EXIST

While it is refreshing to see abuse of men addressed ("City program aids men suffering abuse," Nov 29 - Dec 5, 2007), it is unfortunate that, apart from single reference, Murray Sinclair does not directly address the multiple forms of spousal abuse.

With the legalization of same-sex marriage, there should be a recognition of four forms of spousal abuse: man on woman, woman on man, man on man, and woman on woman.

Even though Murray can state that "for every man abused, there are eight women in the same situation," there are just too many unknowns to speculate on the number of same-sex relationships much less the number and forms of violence within those relationships.

Recognizing and tracking the various problems will provide a clearer picture of same-sex abuse and might even increase the number of men considered abused in opposite sex relationships.

## RONALD G ROWSWELL

*Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by email (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.*

## Passing the budget buck

SCOTT HARRIS / scott@vueweekly.com

There really is nothing to compare with the hue and cry that accompanies the passing of the annual municipal budget by city council. Banner headlines trumpeted the 7.5 per cent hike in property taxes and right-wing columnists chimed in on its inherent inequities and the insidious creep of tax-and-spend government.

To top it all off was the titillating news that councillors had been given an automatic pay raise to account for inflation over the past year, meaning, of course, that in real terms they are making exactly what they were making last year.

While nobody likes tax increases and those at the low-end of the income scale in the city will be more affected, let's be realistic about the impact for the vast majority of homeowners in the city. The 7.5 per cent increase, which was reduced from the 10.9 per cent increase originally proposed by city administrators, will mean a hike of about \$100 for the average household. Yup, a whopping 27 cents a day. That's the kind of money most homeowners sitting on their now-half-million-dollar houses in booming Edmonton wouldn't bend over to pick up on the sidewalk.

It also addresses the issues that those same citizens have spent the last year crying for: faster snow clearing, fewer potholes, more firefighters and paramedics and action on (gasp!) all that graffiti.

While there will always be specifics of budgets people aren't happy with (an increase in the cost of a bus pass when council should be doing everything it can to get people out of their cars is one that makes the head ache), media coverage has largely missed one of the most significant elements of the process.

At the end of the week-long discussions, council still needed to trim an additional \$14 million from the budget to bring it down to 7.5 per cent. Instead of making the politically difficult decision of finding where to trim the money, council sent it back to city manager Al Maurer to find where to cut the additional dollars.

While making no judgment on Maurer's capacities, such decisions should rightfully be made by those people elected by citizens to make them. Budgets are, at their heart, reflections of political priorities and direction. To leave such decisions up to unelected administrators simply to expedite the process is an abdication of one of the key responsibilities of our municipal representatives which, as rookie councillor Don Iveson put so well, reduces the process to "a game." ▽

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# Group calls on Stelmach to make democratic resolutions

SCOTT HARRIS / [scott@vuwweekly.com](mailto:scott@vuwweekly.com)

While most Albertans will head into the New Year making resolutions to lose weight or give up bad habits, an advocacy organization in the province is launching a campaign aimed at convincing Premier Stelmach to make a resolution in 2008 to tackle what it calls the province's looming "democratic deficit."

"A lot of people are familiar with Alberta's infrastructure deficit because they live with it everyday," said Larry Booi, the chair of Public Interest Alberta, and the head of the group's democracy task force. "But they're not so clear on the democratic deficit, which is at least as troubling and problematic."

The group says that there is a "deep and growing frustration with the anemic state of democracy in our province," evidenced by low voter turnout in provincial elections, especially amongst young voters, infrequent and short sittings of the legislature and support for the Tories from a minority of voters returning overwhelming majorities in the legislature.

To address the issue, the organization has launched the More Democracy! campaign to push for six steps that Booi maintains is a place to start much-needed democratic renewal in the province.

**AMONG THE RECOMMENDATIONS** are the standard calls for reform of rules regarding electoral and party financing, greater public consultation on policy and the establishment of a Citizens' Assembly to explore options for replacing the current first-past-the-post system with some form of proportional representation. It also suggests a commission to look to address the gender gap in provincial politics.

While complimenting Stelmach for recent steps he has implemented, the

## NEWS | DEMOCRACY

group also says that the concentration of power in the premier and cabinet, which comes at the expense of individual MLAs, should be remedied by giving more power to multi-party standing committees and increasing the budgets of legislative officers who act as watchdogs on the government, such as the auditor general.

One unique step is the call to abolish the Public Affairs Bureau, an arm of the office of the premier responsible for all government communications.

Pointing to the example of the "I made a commitment and I delivered," ads featuring Stelmach introducing the new royalty regime, Booi charged the bureau is too often involved in partisan promotion.

"Governments have every right to put out information about what they're doing, but we need to make a distinction between the government putting out information about government activities and the party and partisan activities," Booi explained.

"The Public Affairs Bureau doesn't just blur the line between the party and the government, it utterly erases the line."

Booi says the public would be better served by a decentralized approach under which each government department would be responsible for communications about its activities.

Booi says that the recommendations, based on eight public forums held in the spring, will form the basis of a major campaign on democratic reform during the provincial election, which is expected next year.

"Wishing and hoping and naming better things isn't going to make it happen. It's action and pressure that are going to make a difference." ▽

# Concern as Zuma takes ANC reins

## COMMENT | DYER STRAIGHT

GWYNNE DYER  
[gwynne@vuwweekly.com](mailto:gwynne@vuwweekly.com)

"The [African National Congress] should not choose someone of whom most of us would be ashamed," said Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who has a fair claim to being South Africa's living conscience. But on Tuesday the ANC did choose Jacob Zuma as the new party leader, giving him an almost unbeatable advantage in the race to become the country's next president.

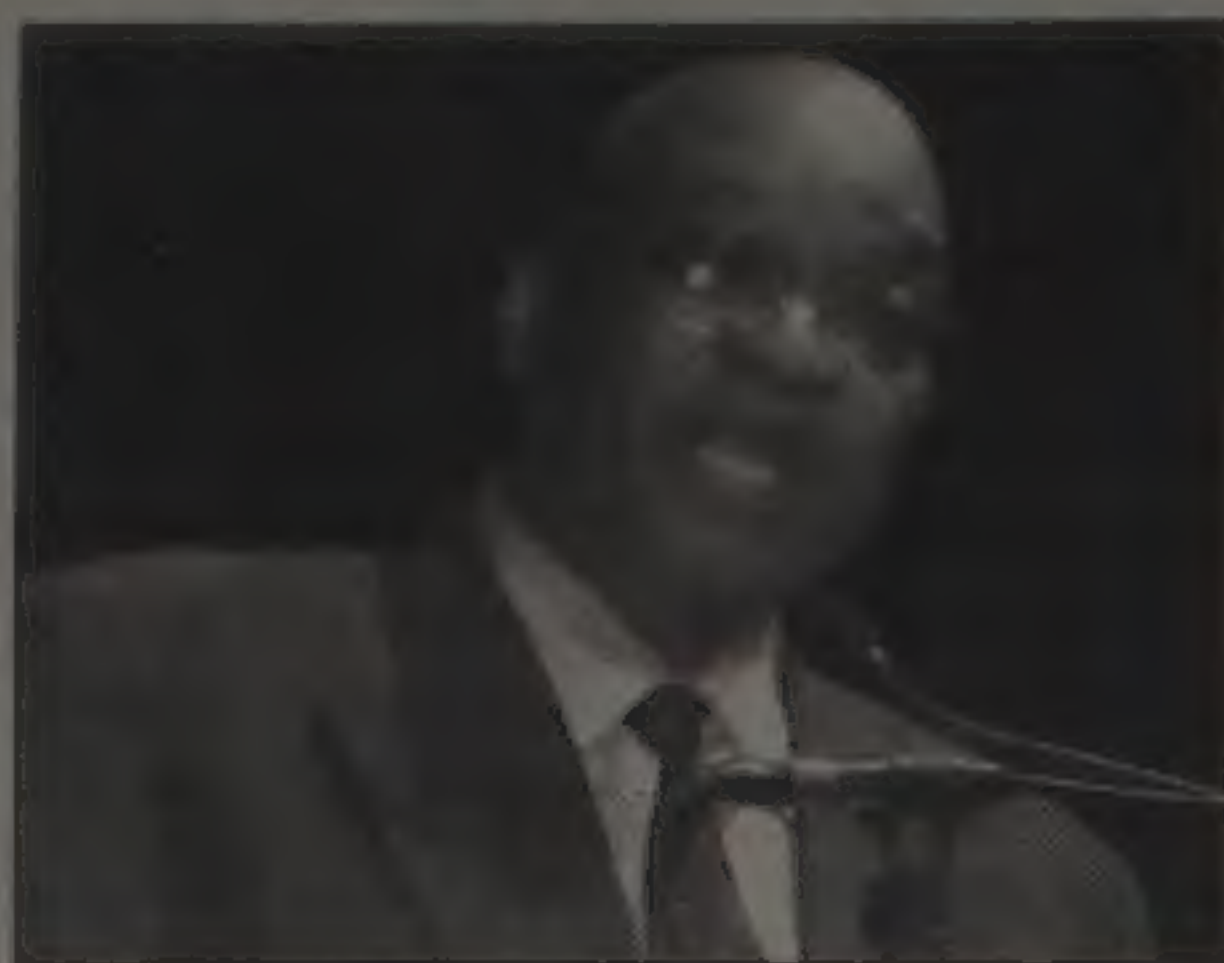
The party conference was a raucous affair, with Zuma's supporters heckling and booing President Thabo Mbeki. The law only allows Mbeki two terms in the presidency, and he wanted to hold on to the ANC leadership as a way of exerting influence over the choice of the next president after he steps down in 2009. But "most of us," or at least most of the 4000 ANC delegates, were not at all ashamed of choosing Zuma, who won the leadership with a 60 per cent majority.

Not only that, but Zuma's supporters made a clean sweep of all five other senior positions in the ANC leadership. Unless he dies or is convicted of some crime between now and 2009, he will be the ANC's candidate for the presidency—and since the ANC still wins national elections almost automatically, he is very likely to be President Zuma 18 months from now. How bad would that be?

Thabo Mbeki thinks it would be very bad. In his speech to the conference he referred repeatedly to "ethical leadership," which was code for "not Jacob Zuma." The two men were once close political allies despite the huge contrast between their backgrounds: Mbeki the austere intellectual with a master's degree in economics, Zuma the charismatic demagogue with no formal education. But when Zuma was charged with corruption two years ago Mbeki dismissed him as deputy president.

The corruption charges were dismissed when a court ruled that docu-

ments seized during a raid by the National Prosecuting Authority on Zuma's office and home could not be used against him because the search warrant was defective. He also escaped conviction in a rape case brought against him by the daughter of an old ANC comrade-in-arms who had been staying in his home. And he began his campaign for the leadership of the ANC, the surest route to the presidency itself.



**HE HAS WON** precisely because of what Mbeki sees as his flaws. The rank-and-file membership of the ANC (and many other South Africans, especially among the poor black majority) have grown weary of Mbeki's distant, almost other-worldly style of leadership, whereas Zuma sings and dances and wears traditional costumes and is definitely one of the boys.

They are also sick of an economy that grows at five per cent, but does not seem to spread the prosperity beyond the new black middle class to the deprived millions who still live in squalor. They take Zuma's warm, affable personality as evidence that he cares more about the poor. And they think that backing Zuma, whatever his faults, is the best way of ensuring that Mbeki really does leave power.

On the other hand, what Mbeki, the South African middle class of all colours, and foreign investors all see in Zuma is a classic African "big man"-style leader in the making. He is not a monster, but he has little respect for the law. His populist instincts would sabotage South Africa's economic growth, and his dependence

on better-educated advisers and old cronies would open the door to massive corruption.

It is not just white South Africans who fear that the miracle of the past 15 years is very vulnerable, and that the nation could all too easily go the way of so many other African countries if the wrong people get into power. For Mbeki, for Tutu, and one suspects even for Nelson Mandela (who chose Mbeki as his successor, after all), Zuma is the man who could wreck the dream. This may be unfair to Zuma, but he will almost certainly become president in 18 months' time unless the law or mortality intervenes.

The law is starting to intervene again. The Supreme Court has just declared the documents seized from Zuma admissible in court, and prosecutors have submitted an affidavit alleging that Zuma received 4 million rand (about \$550 000) from a French arms company while he was deputy president. His former financial adviser is already serving a 15-year prison sentence for soliciting a bribe from that company in exchange for Zuma's support, and if he cannot get those documents ruled out of court again he is in big trouble.

Mortality is an imponderable, of course, and Zuma is only 65. But it was striking that at his rape trial he freely admitted that he had unprotected sex with his accuser, whom he knew to be HIV-positive. He said he took a shower afterwards to avoid infection, which suggests that he is either very stupid—or that he has nothing more to fear from HIV-positive partners.

Odds are that nothing will go wrong, however. Zuma will probably become the president of South Africa in 2009, and then we will see if the fears about him are justified or not. But here's one positive aspect of the situation: last Tuesday was the first time in 58 years that the ANC has chosen its leader by an open vote. ▽

*Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in Vue Weekly.*

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# EDUCATION

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# One E out of three ain't bad: only elected senator finds apartment, builds furniture

MURRAY SINCLAIR / murray@vuwweekly.com

He was first elected in 1998, re-elected in 2004, but didn't get the okay for his seat until this July, before being appointed in October.

His support came evenly from throughout Alberta, but he has set up a constituency office in Calgary only, and has no plans for a province-wide mail-out to his constituents.

Such is the political world of Bert Brown, Canada's second-ever elected senator, seated in a house of Parliament full of appointees from various Liberal and Conservative prime ministers.

"It's been interesting," he told *Vue* in an interview.

The Canadian Senate was set up at Confederation in 1867 to act as an additional unelected chamber of "sober second thought," but with senators widely seen as partisan patronage appointees, the "upper house" now generally acts as a rubber stamp.

Brown has been active since 1983 in the movement for a "triple-E" senate, a shorthand term for having senators elected equally from each province, and serving as effective representatives from their regions.

Alberta's long-reigning provincial Tories support the triple-E idea, and Brown was one of four candidates elected in the province's third senate election, held alongside the 2004 provincial vote.

But recent federal Liberal prime ministers appointed their own senator preferences instead, until Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper came to power and filled an Alberta senate vacancy with Brown last summer. The new senator was sworn in when the Senate started sitting again in the fall.

Various new issues have come up in Alberta between his 2004 election and now, but Brown said he would still be able to represent today's voters after being sworn in on a three-year-old mandate.

Although he was elected as a Tory and not an independent, he said his only platform was to listen to his constituents and press for the triple-E, believing the 300 000 people who elected him were voting for such reform.

"I've been keeping in touch with the government and opposition in Alberta," the senator said.

## NEWS | SENATE

His get-together with Premier Ed Stelmach may stand out in itself, Brown said, recalling how then-premier Ralph Klein told him in 2001 that none of Alberta's appointed senators had ever approached him for a meeting.

He said his Calgary office is a step up from most appointed senators, with some just occasionally traveling the province they're supposed to represent, and others having just a postal box there.

"They're in Ottawa all the time," said Brown. "They should be in their home provinces."

Since his appointment, the senator has been busy trying to find an apartment in Ottawa, and in December he was busy assembling furniture for his Calgary office, where he is available two days a week.

"After the Christmas break, we'll probably have an open house for the office," he said.

Brown is planning a newsletter, like the householder reports also often sent out by MPs, but he doesn't plan to use his parliamentary free-postage privileges to send it out province-wide.

"It's hard to get a hold of three million Albertans [and] I don't think it would be useful," he said, seeing a sort of email system as a better way to go.

But Brown won't be on the ballot in the next provincial election, due to a provincial law that has elected senators in waiting for a maximum of six years, and then serving that long after they are appointed.

The senator will have to retire anyway by the time his mandate is up, because he'll be 75, the Senate's mandatory retirement age.

**BROWN SAID** Albertans have increasingly turned out to vote in senate elections from the first one in 1989. More than 2.2 million Albertans voted for the 10 candidates running for the senate seats in 2004, which was larger than the number who voted for the province's MLAs.

"Albertans are getting madder and madder," Brown said, recalling anger at the federal Liberals ignoring the elections.

But a CBC report on the official 2004 provincial election results

revealed that almost 86 000 voters refused to take a senate ballot, and almost 84 600 filled them out improperly, in some cases deliberately spoiling them. Senate election turnout was 35 per cent to the provincial turnout of 46 per cent.

But Brown said premiers from Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia want to hold senate elections in their provinces, and he pointed to one national poll that showed 79 per cent support for an elected senate.

The same poll indicated the percentage support for elected senators among western Liberal voters was also in the 80s, and from 55 to 67 per cent for those who usually vote NDP, which wants to abolish the Senate.

NDP democratic reform critic Charlie Angus said the Senate is simply "un-reformable," noting the "real entrenched interests" in keeping it an appointed body, and suggested Canadians should "start from scratch" after abolition.

The Ontario MP didn't rule out another type of regionally representative second body, but pointed out that the provincial governments have a lot more power than they did at Confederation's start.

"The problem is that if we tinker [with senate reform], we'll be talking about it 15 years from now," said Angus, who pointed out that changing the number of senators per province requires complicated constitutional changes.

"At the end of the day, the Senate will be still used for bagmen and cronies. I can't see any government giving that up."

In November, the NDP picked up on one appointed senator's call for a national referendum on senate abolition, and it is now targeting what it sees as a flimsy ethics code the mostly appointed senators brought in for themselves.

Canadians voted in a 1992 referendum against the Charlottetown Accord, which contained one variety of an elected senate, but Brown said the accord's other provisions on Quebec and aboriginal rights made it unpopular.

If enough provinces opt to hold senate elections to fill vacancies, he said the trend toward triple-E will be irreversible, noting how that happened in the United States 14 years after Oregon pioneered direct votes for its senators. ▽

# That fifth eggnog and rum may not be the best idea

HEALTH | WELL, WELL, WELL  
CONNIE HOWARD  
health@vuwweekly.com



It's party season, and as my readers know, I'm the first to extol the benefits of a party, of a few drinks, of loosening up. But I'm worried, too; not about a week or two of celebrations, but about the truth that the holiday season for many lasts pretty much all year.

I get why we imbibe as much as we do—it's fun, so much fun, and it takes the edge off bad days and awkward social situations, and can lubricate almost anything. But our love affair with drinking is starting to scare me.

Only one in five who suffer alcohol-induced liver failure are alcoholics; the rest just party a little too hard, a little too often, for a few years too many. An average of four or five drinks a day (which is, for many, easily exceeded when weekend partying is factored in) delivers enough stress to cause fatty liver disease, and fatty liver disease is showing up in more and more of us—estimates now put it at one in five in the developed world.

I know, I know, alcohol isn't the only cause of fatty liver disease. Our soft-drink, fast food, weird-fat, refined-carb diets, along with the sheer volume of chemicals our livers need to deal with daily need to take a pile of the responsibility too. And I know it won't kill us overnight or anything, but fatty liver disease is linked to high cholesterol levels and insulin resistance and diabetes and impaired digestion—things that will, besides stealing our quality of life, end up killing us sooner than we'd planned.

I know we're here for a good time, not just a long time—but that's exactly my point. For a good time here, to enjoy ordinary existence, we need to feel well, and given all that's working against them, our livers are in need of some tender lovin' care.

There's also a little-talked-about, mostly alcohol-induced thing called chronic pancreatitis, in which enzymes necessary for digestion get produced in ever-lower amounts, meaning we fail to properly absorb the nutrients we need to stay well. A chronically inflamed pancreas is a condition which precludes all the excellent veggie-eating and exercise habits in the world. It's simply bad news.

**OVER-INDULGENCE** also plays a role in chronic inflammation, including the kind that comes with gluten intolerance.

Because even if we stick to wines and other gluten-free kinds of alcohol, alcohol magnifies the inflammatory response by a million times, which means even the tiniest bit of gluten in our meal will be an infinitely bigger problem. (Beer and pizza is a staple favourite, and may just throw a pile of us temporarily into mourning, but mourning, I think, is preferable to being chronically unwell.)

Then there are the not-about-anything nasty fights we have around heavy partying, which leave a pile of heartache and crashed relationships in their wake, and the fact that booze is making us depressed, anxious, insomniac and suicidal, and that it's significantly increasing our risk of more than one kind of cancer.

Okay, I can't take anymore. Because almost every under-30 I know drinks too much, too often, and has been doing so for a decade. What's too much and too often? If a glass of wine means four or five, and they're poured into fashionably extra-large sized glasses, you're having too much. If a nightcap means a couple of generous doubles or a six-pack, you're having too much. What constitutes a drinking problem? According to experts, if you routinely drink to build self-confidence, if you drink alone, if it affects your sleeping, if you have to drink just because someone else is, it's probably a problem.

I'm not trying to kill the fun; I'm just saying it's time for a revival of the breakfast club, time to think about old-fashioned moderation. It may temporarily kill a little of the fun, but then living with serious disease by age 30 or 40 is absolutely zero fun.

And cutting down, partying lightly—partying when there's a reason to rather than all the time—besides being infinitely less risky, actually makes it all more fun. Our tolerance goes down again, and we can get that party feelin' on much less. Happy New Year everyone, and many more. ▽

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## VUEWEEKLY ISSUES

Vue Weekly is a friendly, reliable and independent source of information on current events and broader issues of importance to the community. Their commentary is not necessarily the opinion of the organization they represent or of the Weekly.

### Youth delegate 'truly ashamed' of Canada's role in Bali talks

MAY JEONG / cydbali.org

The 13th session of the Conference of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol—the Bali climate change conference in common-speak—saw it all. Countless cases of standing ovations. Maximized security processes at every corner. Tears streaming down the cheeks of seemingly heartless bureaucrats (not the crocodile-type, but the ones of gossip's worth). Broken-down alliances and leaked documents. Drama and trauma and everything else in between.

Never have the dull processes of a multilateral environmental agreement seen such light of day in the media, and never have techno-babbles of intergovernmental organization been afforded such keen interests of humanity. As trite as it may sound, the most recent Bali COP13 resonated with a sense of duty and historic importance. The fortnight-long whirlwind affair of more than 10 000 participants, including delegates, journalists, civil-society members, business sectors, and the occasional on-lookers, was truly an epic unfolding of events—it was an earnest attempt by the citizens of the world at tackling anthropogenic climate change. For those not attuned to the semantics of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), COP13 was momentous in the sense that if it went as planned, was meant to carve out the post-2012 path, when the first phase of the solely surviving environmental treaty, the Kyoto Protocol, comes to an end.

The year 2007 had seen remarkable strides in environmental mitigation efforts: the European Union's call to cut 20 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 compared to 1990 levels, the launch of the Heiligen-damm Process at the G8 summit, the UN Secretary General's High-level Event on Climate Change that saw more than 180 head of states calling for a "Bali breakthrough." Building on such momentum, the Bali COP13 was able to set in place the three ambitious objectives that it had set for itself: to launch negotiations, set an end date and agree to continue dialogue until the deadline of 2009.

All have been achieved, albeit with much upheaval and bickering en route. Negotiations for the post-2012 climate change regime have been successfully launched. The end date of 2009 (COP15 in Copenhagen) has been agreed upon, and all members to the UNFCCC (including the US) have agreed to participate in negotiations leading up to the fateful deadline set for Copenhagen.

**I WAS PARTICIPATING** at the COP13 both as a member of the 30-something Canadian Youth Delegation, and also as a reporter for a Canadian media company—this dual hat-wearing allowed me optimal access to various wonders of Bali-land.

What role did Canada play in this world drama one might ask? I posed the same question to Minister of the Environment John Baird, fresh out of the plenary session that marked the end of the drawn-out marathon negotiations. "We played the crucial role of bridging the gap. I met with almost all head negotiators, some over bi-laterals, and worked until 1:00 am everyday to get the ball rolling." Exactly what bridge, gap between whom, and why the bi-laterals over formal ministerial meetings, was unclear from the Minister's sweeping statements.

Overall, the only meaningful play Canada participated in was that of hindrance, derailment, and obstruction. Starting with the "Beyond Kyoto" triad formed alongside Japan and the US; to the fixation over globally binding emission reduction targets (which the G77 & China block would never agree to); to the misdemeanors during the final hours of the AWG (Ad Hoc Working Group) text negotiations—in



which Canada had only the Russian Federation to count as an ally in blocking the negotiation processes—examples can be drawn up with effortless ease.

Baird was woefully absent, or awfully quiet during critical hours meant to carve out the futuristic prose of humanity. A prominent Canadian journalist promptly refused to attend any of the Baird's press conferences, stating that COP13 was a world story, and Baird had no play in it, thus deserving no space on his daily program. Some speculated that Canada was hiding behind the enclave of the Bush administration, but many were left wondering, where would Canada stand, when the White House goes green?

**AND SO WE FIND OURSELVES** at the proverbial crossroads. In the wise words of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, one of the paths will lead us to a "betrayal of our planet and our children;" the other to a "new comprehensive climate change agreement." The fine scale of nature knows no lies, and the consensus in Bali dictates that the answer is within arm's reach, and the single remaining challenge is that of convincing people.

The current goal of the EU to curb 20 per cent of CO2 emissions by 2020 compared to 1990 levels will halve possibilities of catastrophic climate change by 2050. Canada stands 30 per cent above its Kyoto target. What is more infuriating to many is the government's use of 2005 emissions as its base year, while the rest of the world uses the 1990 level. Seemingly inconsequential, the play on numbers is severely misleading, as Canada's goals of "20 per cent reduction by 2020" is not in alignment with that of the EU's, but is purported as such.

Bali was the very first time that many Canadians, including myself, felt truly ashamed of being from Canada. In the eyes of world affairs, Canada was no longer perceived as the land of pristine landscapes and tearfully beautiful coastlines, but was instead seen as the nation-state potentially responsible for derailing negotiations for a post-2012 climate change regime.

Yet one must not allow for the travails of Canadian politics to threaten and mar the wonders and whimsical outcome of the Bali climate change conference. It is sad that the government of Canada failed to take on the leadership role that its public so desires, but this places heavier responsibilities upon the Canadian peoples to inform the administration that such acts of malfeasance, especially in the international arena, are both unacceptable, and cannot be replicated.

The baton has now been removed from the hands of the bureaucrats behind their respective country's placards, and handed over to the peoples of the world. The onus is on us—one must never forgo the preeminent truth that sound policy only stems from public reaction, and subsequent action. ♥

*May Jeong was a member of the Canadian Youth Delegation to Bali for the COP13 negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.*





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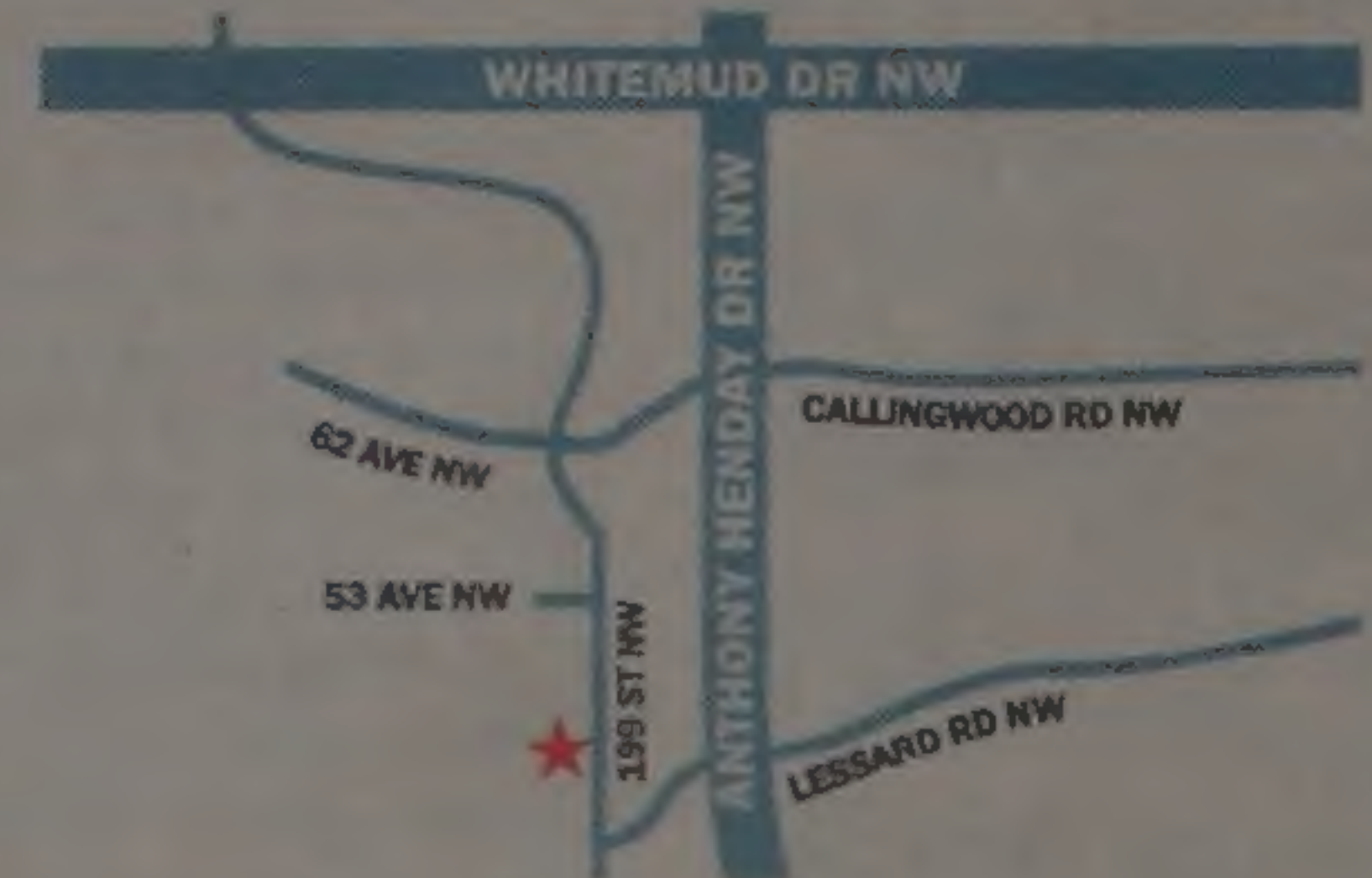
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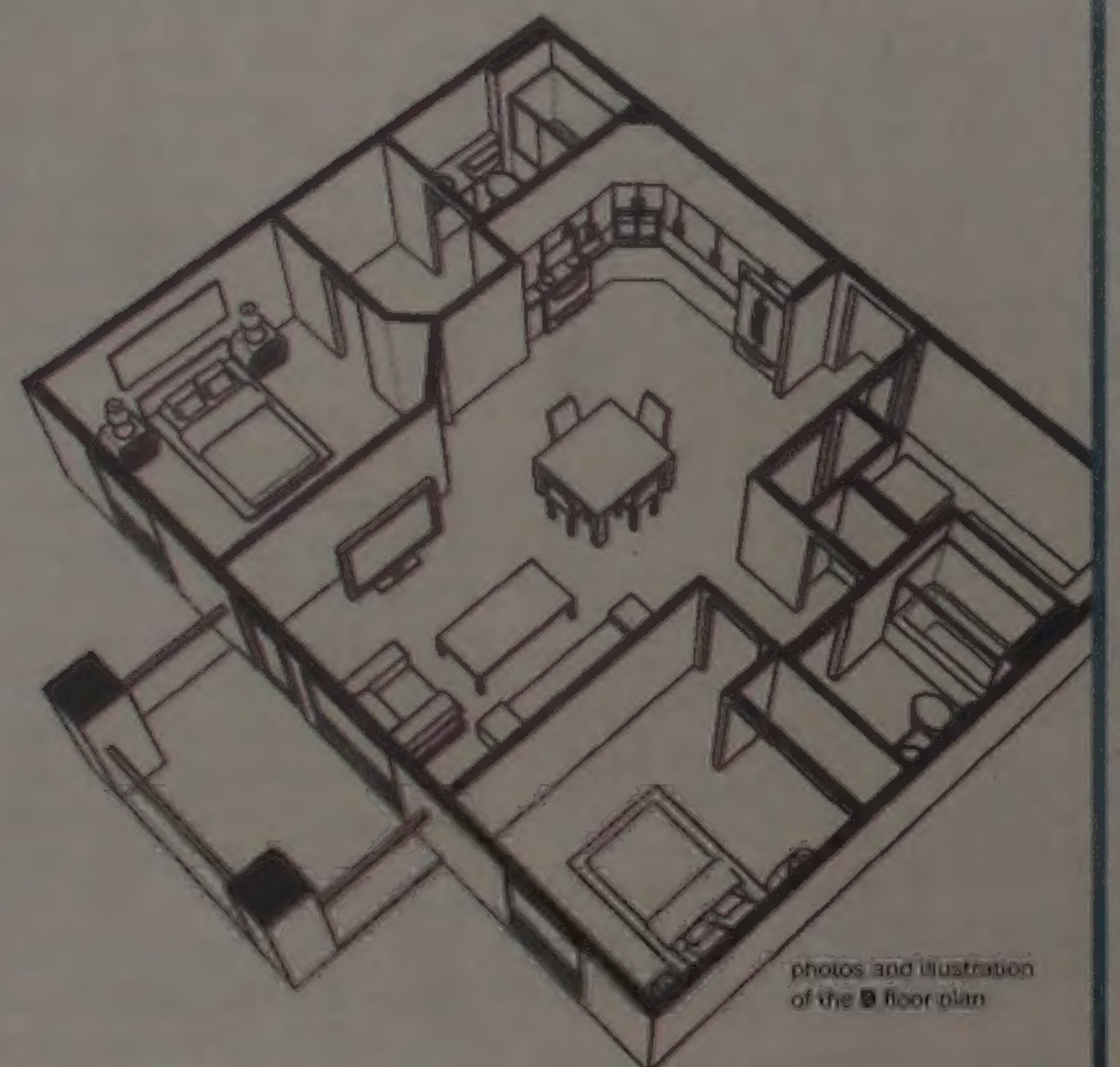
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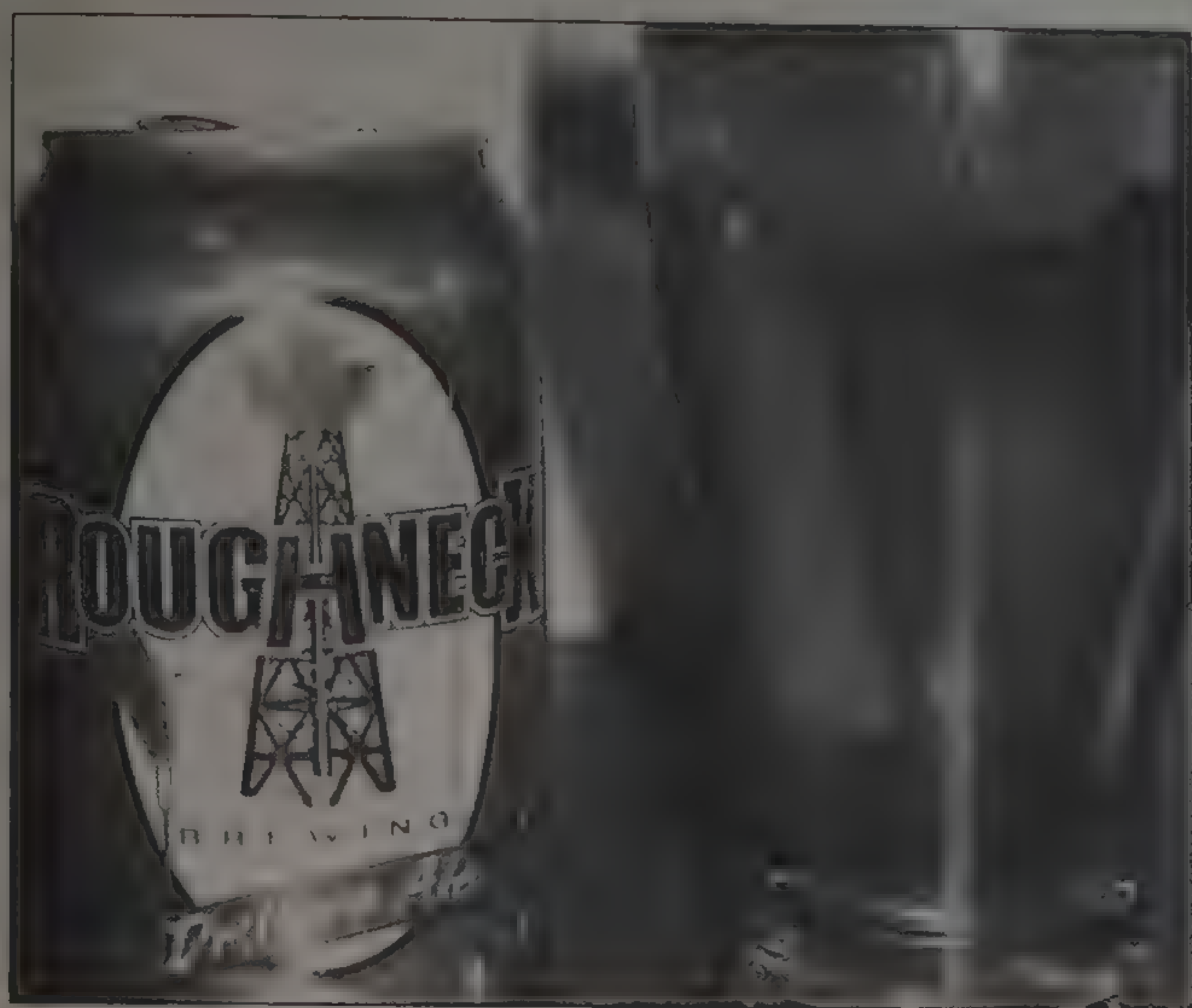
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VIOLINO / 12

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## New kid on the block shows promise

### SUDS! GREAT HEAD

JASON FOSTER  
greathead@vueweekly.com

**DRILLER'S ALE**  
**ROUGHNECK BREWING, CALMAR, ALBERTA**  
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There is a new beer kid in town, and he is one tough customer. He has to be to make it in Alberta's oilpatch, with its heavy equipment, greasy pipe segments, bitterly cold weather and bone-chilling wind.

The same character and determination are required to start up a micro-brewery in this province, where the rules are set to benefit the big boys. It is no easy task to start a brewery in Alberta, but Terry Cameron has set his sights on the Grail. With steely determination, he has made it happen. His beers appeared in Edmonton-area liquor stores in the past month.

Cameron, like many new professional brewers, started as a homebrewer with a dream. Over the past couple of years, he has slowly constructed a brewery on his acreage near Drayton Valley. After trials and tribulations, when the first batch went out the door a few weeks ago, all the trouble was worth it.

At the moment he has one beer, Driller's Ale, sold in cans. The choice to go with cans is odd—most micros choose the cheaper recyclable bottle. My guess is the cans are a salute to Cameron's target market. He wants to offer a local alternative to the blue-collar Canadian

and Blue set.

Cameron calls Driller's Ale a "traditional Canadian Ale," which is a bit obtuse. The beer seems to be a blonde ale, which is a light, easy-to-drink golden ale accenting light malt.

Drillers Ale presents a light gold hue with good, but not brilliant, clarity. There is not much head to speak of, simply a thin white ring on the edge of the glass. The aroma is quite inviting, offering a delicate grainy and toasty malt sweetness and hint of floral hop quality. Some light pear fruit esters show through in the nose as well.

The flavour starts with a soft malt sweetness which welcomes further sips. A grainy quality begins to build partway through, finishing with just the smallest hint of hop bitterness, which serves to dry the beer out. The beer is rather fruity, offering pear and apple notes.

Unfortunately, there is a lingering astringency (a grainy harshness on the roof of the mouth) which detracts from the overall experience. Driller's Ale could also be cleaner, with less fruit notes, to improve its profile. Word also has it that the beer is best drunk fresh—don't let it sit in your fridge for two months.

I must note I am sampling the very first batch from a fledgling brewer. It often takes a few batches to work out the kinks in any beer. Patience is the key word.

My overall assessment is that it is a promising brewery with tons of potential upside for Alberta beer drinkers. My suggestion is this: buy a six pack soon, and then try it again six months from now. I bet the beer will grow on you. ♥

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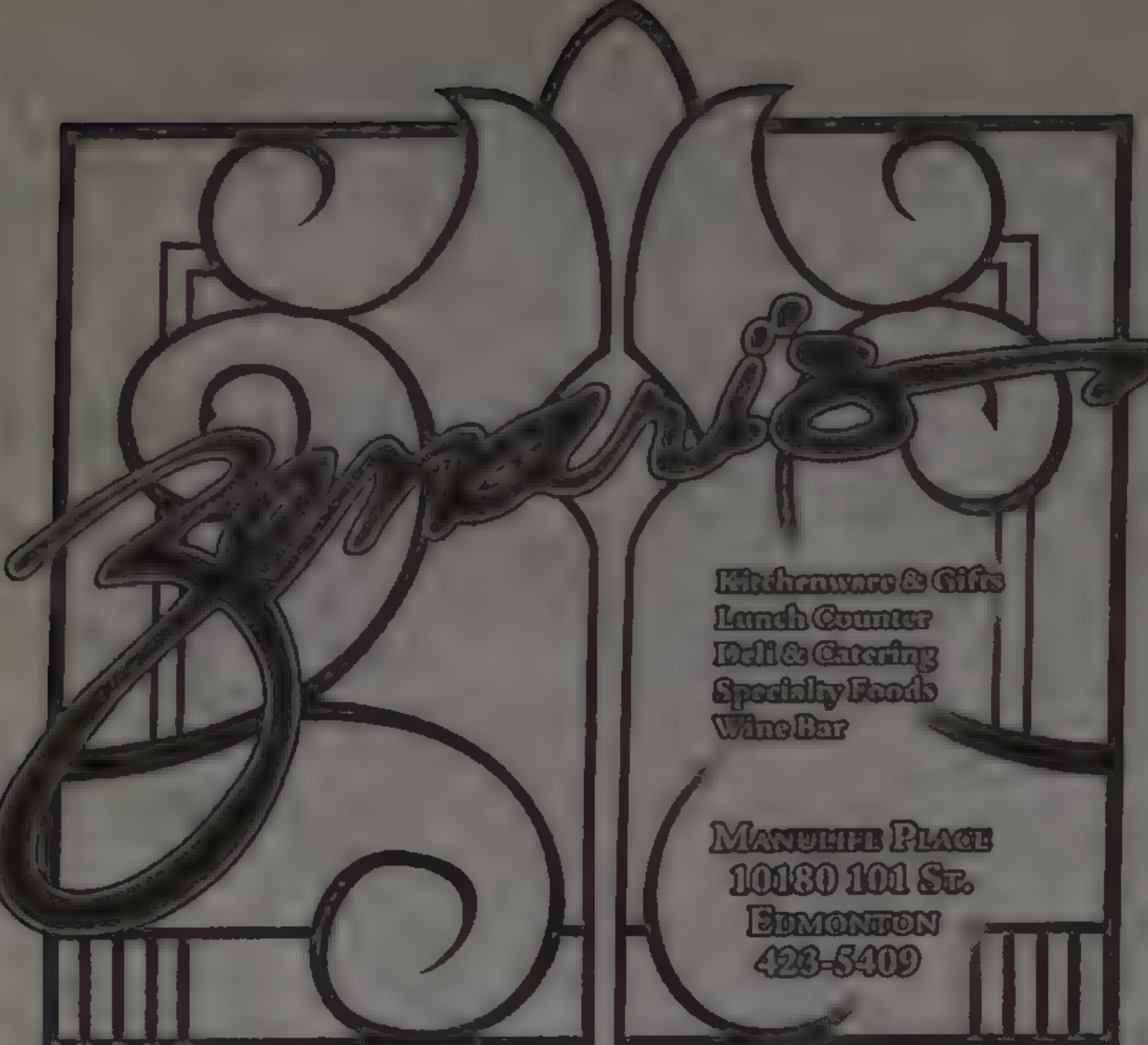
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## If Violino music be the food of love, play on

VIVIAN ZENARI / [vivian@viveweekly.com](mailto:vivian@viveweekly.com)

As a first-generation Italian-Canadian, I tend to pass over Italian-sounding dishes and putatively Italian restaurants unless I feel like indulging in "junk food." I found out about a new Italian restaurant in High Street and the chef's credentials impressed me, but I was cautious about enthusing over it sight unseen.

Chef Kartik Kumar has run dining rooms and restaurants all over the world, from Germany to Dubai, so surely he is versed in Italian cuisine.

**ITALIAN**

MON - SAT UNTIL 10 30 PM  
**VIOLINO**  
 10133 - 125 STREET  
 757.8701

But Kumar ... that's not an Italian name!

To help put the restaurant to the authenticity test, I decided to bring my parents. Due to their tight Christmas schedule (Mom had plenty of biscotti and baccalà fritto to make), we could only arrange for an afternoon date. This was fine, since **Violino** serves

both lunch and supper most days.

Parking was difficult as always in that part of town, but we made it into the converted two-storey house in time for our reservations. The reservations were a wise contingency, as the ground floor was quite full. The decor was neutral in colour but lush in material: orange brocade drapes covered the front windows of this converted heritage home with the glossy, sand-coloured stone tiles on the walls: we all especially appreciat-

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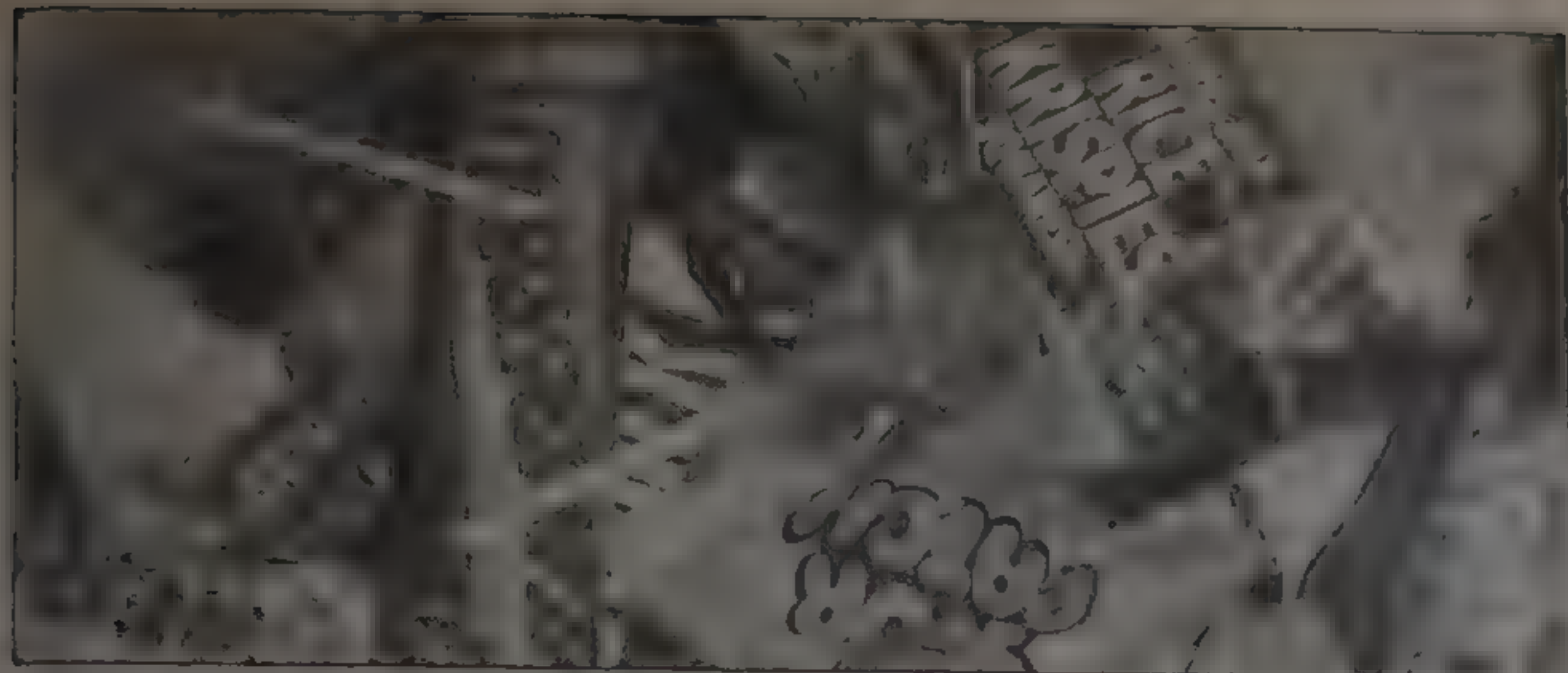
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# Sweet victory over sugar's chains

JAN HOSTYN / jan@vuwweekly.com

November arrived cold, bleak, gloomy and monotonous. In the wasteland between Halloween antics and Christmas excitement, Halloween goodies popped up in every conceivable nook and cranny while Christmas goodies were on their way in staggering numbers.

I usually don't eat a lot of sugar: everything in moderation, as they say. It's much harder to abide by that principle when it is always staring you in the face, and it's impossible for kids. We were eating sugar morning, noon and night. A tiny piece of chocolate here, a cookie there—they don't really count, right? Headaches, mood swings, meltdowns and sluggishness began to set in and I decided that, whether sugar was to blame or not, we needed to cut back.

I decided to start with a purge. For one whole week, there would be no cookies, no candies, no dessert, no maple syrup on our pancakes, no jam on our toast. *No sugar.* My suggestion was met with cries of horror and even a few tears, but I didn't waver. I didn't want to enter December, the season of excess and overindulgence, already having overindulged.

I sat down with my kids and explained why we were doing this. I did a bit of research and, if you believe everything you read, sugar is responsible for almost everything that ails us—it can cause depression, crankiness, hyperactivity, kidney damage, drowsiness, cardiovascular dis-

## THE SUGAR-FREE

ease and hypertension. It can contribute to osteoporosis, eczema, diabetes, a depressed immune system, wrinkles and grey hair. There are also reports that sugar is addictive. The list is endless.

However, to simplify it, I said we needed to put healthy foods in our bodies so that our bodies would be healthy. In excess, sugar was not a healthy food.

**AFTER MANY QUESTIONS** and protests, we all agreed to the experiment. Making it a challenge almost made it fun for the kids. They became actively involved in what they could eat and couldn't eat.

They became shocked and dismayed to discover just how many foods do contain sugar, especially foods that aren't intuitively obvious. Breakfast cereals were not allowed (they all contain sugar, even the healthy ones), nor was ketchup, some crackers, canned soup, the beloved chocolate milk, bought spaghetti sauce, some of the breads and bagels we eat, the porridge I make that I sweeten (only slightly, but still)—the list goes on.

I also didn't want to simply replace sugar with a sugar substitute. That would be missing the point. The focus was to go without sweet things, whatever their origin. Cake made with a sugar

CONTRIBUTOR: JEN MOORE

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### NEW YEAR'S EVE

If you still don't have plans, get down to Churchill Square and merge with the press of celebrating Edmontonians. Nightworks on the Square will be a spectacular fireworks show with music and magical light effects. John Ulyatt and Joe Bird will host some City Hall events and there will be music at the library, the CBC and a heated outdoor stage in Churchill Square. (Yay, Captain Tractor!) Drop off new and gently used clothing for the Mustard Seed.

*Dish Weekly spills the beans on culinary happenings around town. Got an event, an announcement or some substantiated gossip? Email [dish@vuwweekly.com](mailto:dish@vuwweekly.com) or fax 426.2889.*

# Get baked for the holiday season

SHARMAN HNATIUK / sharmah@vancouverweekly.com

**D**esperately searching for a last-minute holiday gift, I found the holiday season was in full swing. Not only was I behind on buying gifts, I was seriously behind on my Christmas baking. Normally I take the time to make a variety of Christmas cookies, squares and goodies, but this year I was short on time.

I love spending time in the kitchen whipping up homemade treats, and I love the reaction that people have when they know I've taken the time to make something especially for them. I wasn't quite ready to go from gift wrapping my own chocolate-covered pretzels to buying a box of Purdy's chocolates, but I found a happy medium. There are several wonderful independent bakeries willing to make, bake and wrap baked treats for me.

On Saturday morning, I rose early with a mission to check out what some of the local bakeries in Edmonton have to offer. I'm not a chocolate lover, but the smell of fresh baked bread and the sight of delicate pastries bring an instant smile to my face. I feel like a kid in a candy shop as I peer through the glass at rows upon rows of cakes, tarts, and cookies.

I decided to start with one of Edmonton's most famous bakeries: **Bon Ton** on 149th Street. Although it was a chilly run from the car to the

shop, the heat from the ovens inside instantly warmed me. As I wandered, I found a number of gift baskets filled with a variety of items such as fresh baked Stollen (traditional German Christmas fruit bread), shortbread cookies and fondue spread. They also have take-out containers filled with gingersnap cookies, perfect for an office gift exchange.

I know my next comment will make me sound like such a girl, but the cakes at Bon Ton were so pretty and I wanted one so bad. A raspberry white chocolate torte (small \$22.50 large \$37.50) would be the perfect gift for your Christmas party host, or I'm sure I could throw a Christmas party for one and feel good about giving it to myself. A less expensive gift is their hazelnut roll (\$8.50) which looked soft enough to pull apart with my fingers.

After the cakes, I found myself overwhelmed by cinnamon bun choices. Pecan buns, stone-ground cinnamon buns, cinnamon butterflies and sweet poppy seed buns were all screaming my name. Honestly, I don't understand how Tim Hortons is still in business when all these affordable, mouth-watering sticky treats are made from scratch in bakeries all over the city.

**I TORE MYSELF AWAY** from the delicious sites and smells of Bon Ton and



## NEW BAKING

travelled south to **Fresh Start Bakery** in Riverbend Square. This European-style bakery and restaurant was producing aromas of delectable proportions the instant I opened the door.

While I made a mental note that I must return to try their brunch menu, I was overwhelmed by the number of fresh-baked breads available. Their cinnamon buns almost got the better of me as well, but I was glad that I picked up a package of their homemade granola for \$7.99. This sweet and somewhat healthy treat certainly improved my morning yogurt, and I

believe it would make an excellent addition to any bakery basket for the holidays.

A familiar stop in the University area was **Bee Bell Health Bakery**. During busy hours, the number system gives this large bakery a sense of organized chaos. Their cheese buns are a personal favourite, and I will pout for a week if they run out of sour cherry turnovers smothered in icing.

The famous Edmonton bakery is also packed with fresh-baked breads, cakes and pastries that make a perfect holiday gift, instead of that boring box of Magic Moments. I'm pretty sure no one would pick through and leave behind any casualties from a Bee Bell bakery box.

To conclude my Saturday morning bakery research, I popped into **Cobs**, a personal favourite of mine. I indulged in two of their seasonal treats, including the whole-wheat cranberry walnut bread. The deal of the day had to be the gigantic, iced pumpkin scone for \$1.85. It was a wonderful combination of basic pumpkin flavour with a very sweet icing. I found myself having "just one more bite" the entire car ride home. I took note of the Cobs value packages: the Cinnamon Bun & Loaf Pack for

\$12 would be a welcome treat of holiday baking.

**FOR ME, FINDING** a new bakery or visiting my regular suppliers is always exciting. I never know what new treat I will find. While some people shy away from bakeries because of the whole anti-carbohydrate obsession, I have no shame in indulging in a gooey cinnamon bun or buttery croissant. Personally, I think people who don't eat carbs are weird.

Besides, I'd much rather have someone bring me a unique fresh bread than some Ferrero Rochers, but that's just me.

So if you're late with a Christmas gift, bringing something to a get-together or hosting a soiree yourself, why not try filling a box from a bakery instead? There are a lot of people out there who would love to receive shortbread cookies, fudge, or a package of peanut brittle.

In this crazy holiday season, it seems like fewer people are finding time to do Christmas baking. Let a professional help you out. I'll make you a deal—if you try my advice and the gift isn't appreciated, feel free to return it to me, and I'll be more than happy to eat it. ♥



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## ITALIAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

ed the soft-napped, plump, high-backed dining chairs. The namesake violin was an expressionist statue of a violin in a glass case.

None of the decor seemed particularly Italian, but I was encouraged when it turned out that my parents knew the dining room's host, with whom they slipped readily into Italian when he seated us. He was soon replaced by our cheery server.

At times she seemed overwhelmed by the volume of guests; for example, she began to remove our wine glasses without asking us if we wanted any wine, which my father and I did. As the lunch hour progressed and the number of guests in the dining room dwindled, her attentiveness improved.

**THE GUESTS WERE** a varied lot. As I expected, the restaurant had attracted a couple of quartets of old Glenora dames, who likely chose to dine in groups of four to accommodate the four-seater round tables. Next to our table, a casually dressed set of men were having a business lunch, one of them sporting a Jethro Tull concert shirt.

The lunch menu can be viewed online and features complex flavour combinations within the lunchtime standards of soups, salads, sandwiches, pizzas and pasta. We all opted for sandwiches. My father selected the smoked salmon sandwich with Dungeness crab meat (\$13), my mother and I the Il Reale (\$11). All sandwiches came with a choice of roasted

asparagus soup or a salad.

The Il Reale sandwich consisted of grilled chicken breast, maple bacon, lettuce and tomato topped with three rectangular pieces of brie, all placed between two ovals of grilled foccacia bread. My sandwich was gorgeous: the combination of bacon and chicken surprised me, and the cranberry-wood apple mayonnaise on the bread added depth to the meats. Particularly remarkable was the actual toasting of the bread: it seemed to have a wafer of light crunchiness on the top and bottom with a more robust crunchiness in the inside: in short, the texture was a flavour unto itself.

My soup was not what I had expected. I have become accustomed to the thick, cornstarchy goop served around the city rather than the thinner, delicately-flavoured voluté that Violino serves.

My father was delighted by the presentation of his open-faced sandwich, which revealed the generous heap of rose-brown Dungeness crabmeat on the baby pink smoked salmon. We all remarked on the reasonable cost of the sandwich considering the food portions and quality.

**FOR DESSERT,** I ordered the espresso tiramisu, and my parents ordered the vanilla gelato (\$6 each). We also ordered espressos (\$3.25 each): I sensed that this was a place that served robust, bitter-free espresso that was drinkable without diluting it with milk and flavoured syrup. By the time the espresso arrived, I had not actually finished the wine I had ordered with my meal, a Sicilian Nero

d'Avola (\$9.75), which was heavier than my father's merlot (\$7.45), and which hit the spot for me on a wintry day.

Before the desserts arrived, my gambit to bring my parents along paid off: the Italian host my parents knew materialized with a bottle of grappa stravecchia, a 20-year-old Piedmontese grape-based liqueur, which he doled out for all of us (mille grazie, Sergio!). I don't normally like grappa, but this straw-coloured variant was eminently drinkable, smooth and relatively gentle on the back of the throat.

When the desserts arrived, my mother tsked at my precipitous consumption of the espresso ("You're supposed to drink the coffee last," she whispered). She lauded the Italian ice cream (from Bueno Gelato down the street), which was yellow, just like the vanilla ice cream she remembered having in the old country. My tiramisu, an Italian trifle of marscapone cheese layered between espresso-doused savoyard biscuits, was frothy and cheesy and not too sweet. I am used to my own tiramisu, which I so artlessly concoct that the biscuits are swimming in brandy, but after the grappa and wine (which I downed as a chaser for the grappa), I was past caring about the dessert's alcohol content.

With the restaurant's elegant decor and lovely, inexpensive menu, Violino should satisfy a wide variety of luncheoners, whether they be the local aristocracy, your rockin' best friend from high school or Italian gourmands who also happen to be your parents. ▼

## SUGAR-FREE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

substitute would still be unhealthy.

As with any purge, the first couple of days were the hardest. We found that we particularly missed having something sweet before bed. Big bowls of pomegranate seeds solved that problem—they became a nightly ritual. Hot chocolate was replaced with warm milk, flavoured with a few drops of vanilla and sprinkled with cinnamon.

We made other modifications. I added extra raisins, bananas and cinnamon to the porridge that they love and no one missed the honey I normally drizzle on. Toast was unsweetened whole wheat raisin bread, lightly buttered, or multigrain topped with cheese, tomato or unsweetened peanut butter. Fruit, always popular, became even more so. We relied on simple, unprocessed foods, things you actually eat raw or buy raw and then cook. What a concept.

**DID WE EVER SLIP UP?** Of course we did. There were innocent things like making my daughter a whole wheat pita pizza with sugar in the sauce, and not so innocent things like my husband feeding my daughter a bag of Cheezies. My other daughter "forgot" and ate a donut at school one day as part of a birthday celebration. Overall, we made it through the week successfully.

We survived the irritability and



mood swings that permeated the first couple of days. We learned to adapt habits, improvise and experiment. We learned how much sugar there is in the world today. We learned that we could do without it and have fun in the process. As my daughter said part way through the week, "This is kind of fun!"

Did I miss sugar? Again, of course I did. I missed the Callebaut chocolate I savour with my daily latte. I missed the freedom and flexibility that such a restriction places on food consumption. And, once in a while, I simply missed sugar.

To be honest, we didn't really make it through a "full" week. We went Monday to Friday and then took the weekend off. Surprisingly little sugar was consumed on that weekend, but it was nice to know we could. We enjoyed the

experiment so much that we went sugarless the following week, too—Monday through Friday of course.

For me, I know when I've consumed too much sugar. I feel different. I know when my kids have had too much sugar. Will I cut out sugar? No way. It is one of life's little pleasures. Is it addictive? I don't know, but it can certainly become a habit rather quickly.

The experiment was a success. We are now going to try to eat healthy most of the time. It did make us much more aware of what goes into our bodies. Sugar, unfortunately, is not the only food that could be deemed "bad".

Remember, everything in moderation. Sugar in itself is not the villain. Celebrate and enjoy the pleasures of the season. Now I'm off to sample some buttery shortbread. ▼



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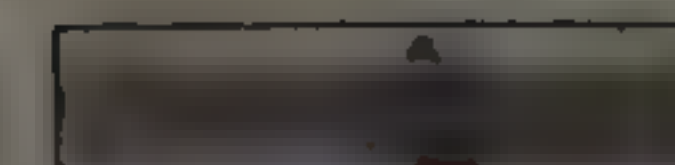
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## Old folk wisdom, spit tests are no replacement for good AVI training

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vnewweekly.com

Growing up and learning how to ski, my mom imparted some of the things that she learned about snow safety in the old country, back when lift-serviced hills were more of a luxury and boot packing was more of the norm. She'd learned of the dangers of avalanches and was told that if she got buried that she should spit. The direction the spit went would give important clues as to which way was up. You don't want to go digging yourself out in the wrong direction.

This little nugget of info seemed logical to me as a young tyke—until I moved into the Rockies and had my first experience with powder. That first powder day taught me an invaluable lesson: when you've fallen and you're immersed in deep snow, it just ain't that easy to move. When you're buried in it instead of floating on top of it, snow is more like wet cement than the puffs of powder we salivate over watching Warren Miller flicks. And if you've had the misfortune of being covered with several feet of



### SAFETY

snow, knowing which direction is up is probably the least of your worries.

A couple of hours' hike up from my backyard is a beautiful bowl. While I

moved to Fernie for a lot of different reasons, this access—without even setting foot in a vehicle—is an added bonus. The mountain bowl, however, with its sparsely treed steeps, can also be extremely dangerous. That's the paradox: the most appetizing lines to ride are prime avalanche zones. This

prompted a trip to the local college to take an **AVI course**. While most ski towns offer free single-day lessons, I opted for an 18-hour deal, with nine in-class hours and a whole day touring out of bounds.

While in class, our instructor Dave Aikens, a long-time patroller at Fernie

Alpine Resort, instilled in his 12 students a healthy fear of snow. We were all there to learn how to travel through the backcountry—whether on skis, boards or sleds—safely. While I remember sitting out at Temple Lodge on the backside of Lake Louise one fine spring day watching the snow crack and roll down into Wolverine Bowl, the avalanche footage Aikens brought to the classroom was even more awe-inspiring. Huge swaths of snow shattered and roared down slopes at astonishing speeds, and serene mountain scenes became domains of disaster.

Most avalanches that harm or kill people are triggered by the victims themselves or someone they're traveling with—a sobering thought. There are ways, of course, to minimize the risks. Backcountry denizens use all manner of tests to try and predict what the snow pack will do. Beginning with a visit to the Canadian Avalanche Centre's website ([avalanche.ca](http://avalanche.ca)) is a good place to start, but it's also important to take into consideration things like escape routes, the direction your desired slope is facing and weather, both past and present. And you have to equip yourself with the proper gear like beacons, shovels and probes.

**THE EARLY SEASON** precipitation in the area was ripe for avalanche activity. A large dump of light snow was followed by a fair amount of rain, making the snow pack top heavy. The weekend before our class began saw the death of two folks in Kananaskis. They caused an avalanche digging a profile pit, which is used to discern the stability of the snow by looking at its layers. When the class met at the base of Fernie Alpine Resort, it was snowing and according to the CAC website, danger was considered to be moderate, moving up to considerable later in the weekend.



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CONTINUES ON PAGE 18

# Getting the money shot at the best and worst of times

COLIN WISEMAN / colinw@vuweekly.com

Taking a good photo seems pretty simple—all you need to do is point and click, right? But when it comes to getting the shot on the ski hill, many people experience mixed results. If your shots suffer from blurry subjects, grey snow or air that looks way too small, fear not—you're not the only one. And, if you follow a few simple guidelines, it is possible to get consistent and predictable results out of your camera.

Perhaps the most important photographic consideration is exposure. When shooting in snow, exposure can often be compromised. Without getting into too much technical detail, it is important that you have a fast enough shutter speed to freeze action. This can be achieved through using the sports setting on your camera. However, the highly reflective nature of snow can often confuse your camera's built in light meter, resulting in grey snow. The most effective tool to combat this is exposure compensation, a feature available on most consumer grade point-and-shoots. Set the exposure compensation to +1 at first and try a test shot. If the snow is still grey, set it to +1.5. Combined with sports mode, you should have proper exposure and a fast enough shutter speed to freeze the action. Now that your exposure is dialed, it's time to think about finding an angle.

**WHEN SHOOTING FROM** directly below a skier you lose perspective and the slope can look flat. Instead, try shifting around to the side and moving up the hill so you are shooting at more of a 45 degree angle to the rider and you will be able to show the steepness, and, by shooting jumps from slightly below and to the side you can see both the size and distance of the air, making it look bigger. Don't be afraid to lie down on the snow or climb a tree to make something unique; offering a different perspective can make for an interesting photograph. Once you have found a suitable spot to showcase the terrain it's time to think about composition.

If you look at a ski or snowboard magazine, there are a few things you will surely notice about the bulk of the shots: they tell the story. Sure a shot of your buddy in nothing but blue sky is cool, but how are we to know how big he is going? Make sure to show the takeoff and landing of a jump to show its size and then people don't have to take your word for it.

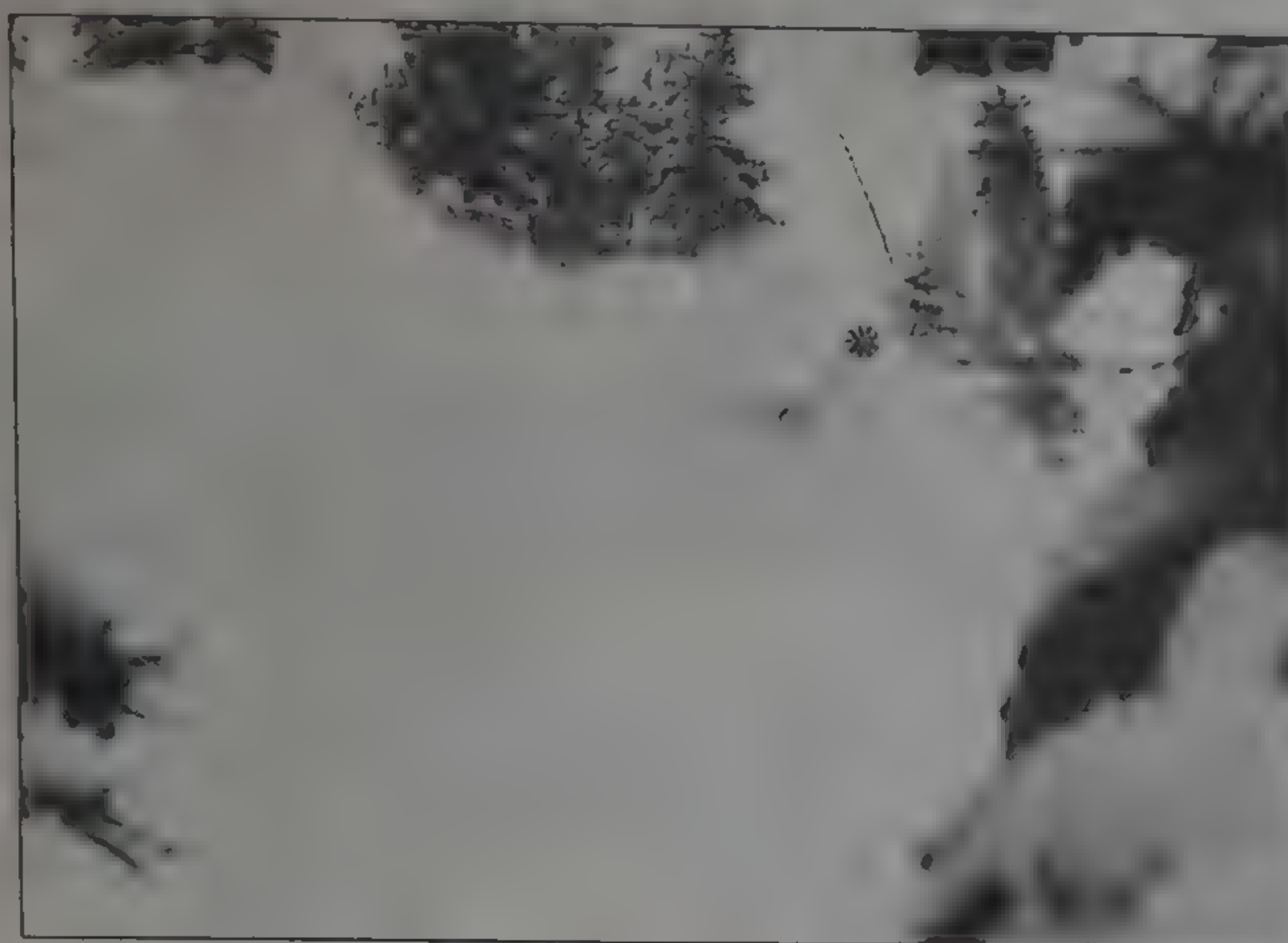
It is also important to consider the rider's location. Visualize where the rider will be going and try to find a composition that will allow them to be isolated against a clean background at the high point of the action. Rather than following the rider with your camera, hold your camera steady and allow the rider to move into the frame, clicking the shutter when they reach the predetermined spot. This will ensure a clean background and a controlled composition: the rider will be exactly where you planned.

A last consideration for composition is where you place the rider. While the direct center of the photo-

## RIDE PHOTOGRAPHY

graph may seem ideal, it can often lead to a static image. By placing the rider in the top third or the uphill third of the frame, and leaving space for them to move into, you can make a more dynamic image that gives the viewer a sense of anticipation and tells a story about not only what is happening at that moment, but also about what might happen next. This technique, referred to as "the rule of thirds", is widely used by professional photographers to create pleasing images.

Timing the shot is a final thing to consider. Try to take the shot at the moment of peak action: the rider's highest point in the air, or the apex of the turn. With most digital cameras, there is shutter lag or a delay from



pressing the button to the camera taking the photo, which can make things

difficult. This can often be bypassed by holding the button down half way

and then depressing it all the way when the time is right.

Although it may seem complicated at first, take it one step at a time. Be sure to familiarize yourself with your camera, read the manual, and take a look at a few magazines and take time to analyze what you like or dislike about your favorite photos. Then incorporate those things into your own shots. Take the time to talk to your subject and plan the shot out—communication is key. Furthermore, these ideas apply to more than just snow photography; practice your composition and timing while walking your dog, in your backyard or in the streets before heading to the hill. Don't be afraid to experiment and look for new, unique angles. If you take the time to think about exposure, angle and composition, your shots will improve and provide exciting and rewarding photos. ♥

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# 'Big box' riding experience is way better than retail therapy

JEREMY DERKSEN / snowzone@vancouverweekly.com

Even early in the season, Rabbit Hill's terrain park looked like a carnival midway. Big fun boxes were scattered throughout the temporary park on the hill's west side, near the parking lot. Boarders in neon, plaid and camo completed the effect, looking like a bunch of gangly carries.

Like other local hills, Rabbit Hill's terrain park is a big draw for many guests—even more so in recent years. A couple of years ago on input from its park-patronizing customers, Rabbit Hill eschewed its halfpipe in order to focus more on the park. "The urban style of hitting rails and things like that is becoming far more mainstream than halfpipe," said Rich Parie, Rabbit Hill owner/manager, "though I have heard [halfpipe] is making a bit of a comeback, so we'll have to see what the future holds."

Head park designer Curtis Plasko and his team design and build most of their own boxes and features in-house. However, while a big, innovative park is something the hill prides itself on, it's only part of the appeal. "This is a great place to bring your family, or tune up your skills for those mountain trips," enthused Parie.

On a busy December weekend I saw all types of riders out enjoying the day. Young racers carved slalom turns through a series of gates on Bay Street. Over on the beginner slope, Bunny Hop, instructors and their



swarms of tiny charges practiced the basics. With their baggy outfits and awkward movements, they reminded

me of the Oompa Loompas from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Come to think of it, with the elabo-

## THE RABBIT HILL

rate park set-up, brightly clad riders and clustering families, the hill had that same surreal yet somehow pleasant feel as the original version with crazy Gene Wilder as Willy Wonka. I had my skis slung over my shoulder as I trudged through the parking lot, grinning as I looked up at the scene. I imagine I looked a little like Wilder myself, greedy as I was to throw down some turns of my own.

**IT DIDN'T HURT THAT** on the way to the hill I had discovered a wondrous thing: the distance from a particular Starbucks locale on Calgary Trail to Rabbit Hill is about one coffee, give or take a couple sips. By the time I hit the parking lot at Rabbit, the high was kicking in.

Sinister, snow-covered firs slouched conspiratorially over the t-bar trail. Between manmade and fresh snow, the resort was muffled in blankets of white. This only served to make me hungrier. Despite high traffic on the runs, the snow remained surprisingly soft as I cycled up and down the hill. Curious how they achieved such excellent snow consistency, I asked Parie about their snowmaking and grooming procedures.

"With colder temperatures the quality of the snowmaking gets better—it's

not as wet so it doesn't get as hard and icy," he explained. "It's a far better, more workable product. We also till up the snow every night."

Back at the park, the slope echoed with thumps and clanks as boarders jibbed on the boxes and features. This season the hill is introducing the "Trulli Talented" park series, with open competitions taking place each month. "We're organizing our own this year. Usually local shops do it but with insurance issues and liability, it can be difficult for them," said Parie. "They help with sponsorship and prizes, so it's a win-win."

And you don't need a golden ticket to be eligible for the prizes—you just have to kick out the jams. ▼

Rabbit Hill is open 4 pm - 9 pm Mon-Fri, and 9 am - 5 pm weekends. Lift tickets are sold in three-hour, five-hour and full-day increments. A full-day adult ticket is \$33 plus GST. See rabbit-hill.com for more info.

To ensure riders aren't stranded, Rabbit Hill runs bus transportation from locations in Edmonton, St. Albert, Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Devon, Sherwood Park and Beaumont. A one-way fare is \$6 and a return trip is \$10. Depending on where you depart from, pickup times are between 8:30 and 9:20 am, and return times between 4:45 and 5:30 pm. Call 955.2440 for more info. ▼

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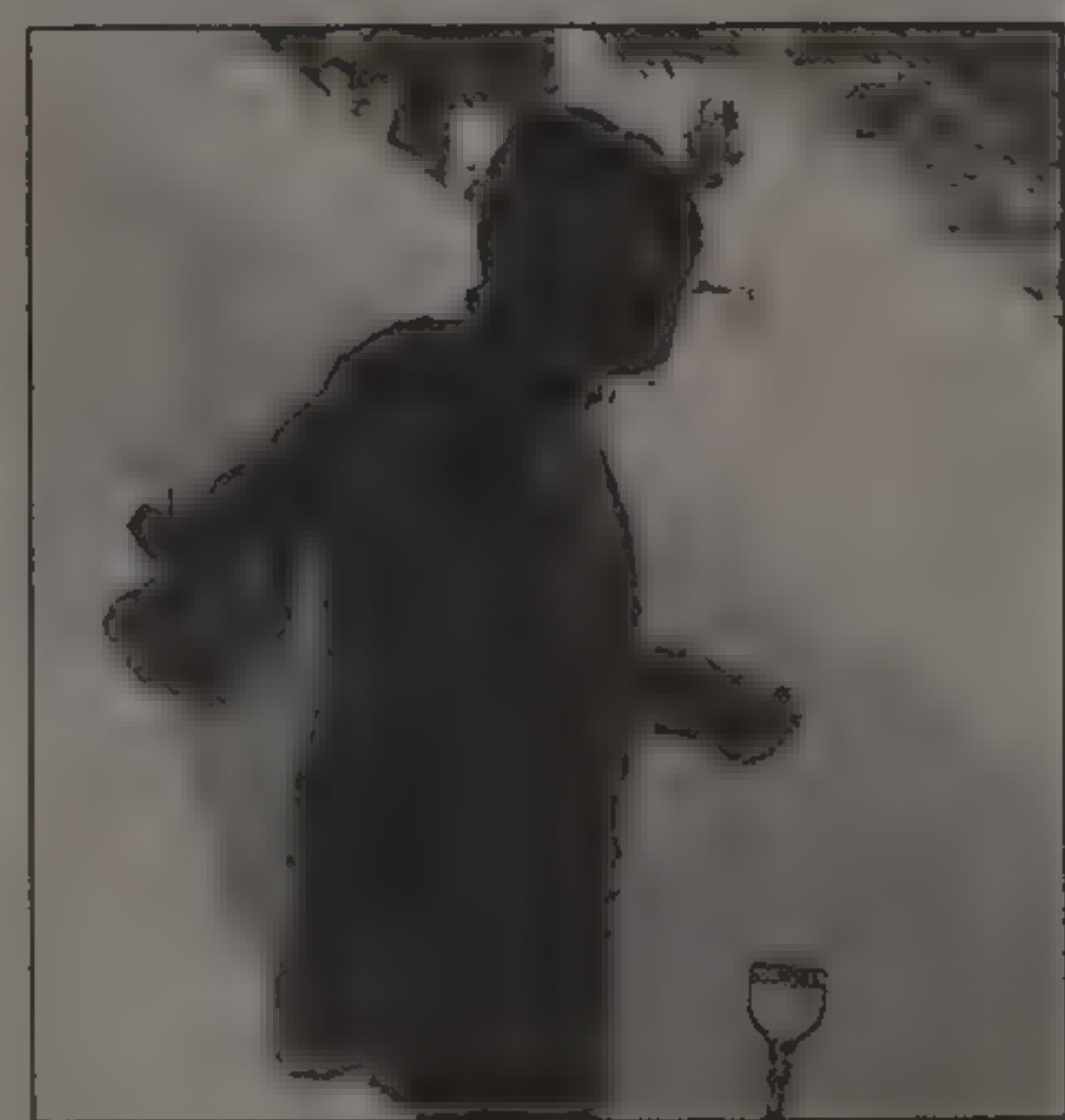
## SAFETY

UNUSUAL WEATHER

Geared up with skins and skis or boards and snowshoes, however, we were keen to be out of the classroom for a day of touring. Taking two chairlifts to the top of the hill, we headed south, out-of-bounds and into Lost Boys terrain. The trees were covered in hoarfrost and a blessed silence muffled any noise coming from the distant chairlifts. There was a considerable crust under the shallow layer of fresh snow, but switch-backing up the slope caused little out-of-the-ordinary disturbance. It wasn't long, though, before we were out on an exposed slope that called for some extra caution.

Taking the traverse one at a time, we eventually found a spot to undertake a battery of tests to judge the snow's stability. Our profile pits revealed a light upper layer that we could stick a whole hand into, while underneath was the thick crust brought on by the rains the week before. Here it was difficult to insert a knife. The bottom layer was quite dense as well. Our compression tests and Rutschblock tests (where a skier or snowboarder jumps on a block of snow to see how much impact it takes to topple) revealed that the terrain we were in was pretty darn stable. We were in the clear to track out a beautiful slope of snow, and slice it up we did, with reckless abandon.

**THAT ISN'T THE END** of the story,



though. We also had to do a rescue, and despite how much we thought we knew it was all so theoretical. Aikens wasn't going to have the six of us easily track one beacon and dig it up. No, we had to recover four "bodies," three with beacons and one without. Needless to say, the beacons were recovered in a matter of minutes, but the poor beaconless knapsack that was covered under only a foot of snow didn't stand a chance. With a probe-line our only option, it took a good half-hour to pinpoint the pack, and in most circumstances that would mean certain death for a human being.

See, not only does any large amount of it cement itself around you, but you're also stuck with just the limited oxygen around your mouth. Breathing turns it into carbon dioxide, causing you to pass out in a matter of minutes. My mom taught me a lot of important things, but I don't think the spit test is one of them. ▼

# Do you know the code?

BOBBI BARBARICH / bobbi@vancouverweekly.com

Maybe you've seen it before. The large yellow signs are posted above hand dryers, on the backs of bathroom doors, beside the ticket booth and on back of your lift ticket. But have you ever actually read the **Alpine Responsibility Code**? Did you even know there was one?

My first encounter with the code was when I was learning to ski. Unwittingly, I found myself on the only black run of our local hill. I was trying to advance from the bum-sliding-screaming-snowplow stage when I careened over a cliff and landed directly on the skier in front of me.

Toques flying and skis launching, we slid to a stop below the drop-off. We were then joined by a far more advanced skier whose momentum picked us up and carried us to the bottom of the hill—and the feet of a stern patroller. In the short silence that followed, a ski skidded toward us and hit me in the back of the head.

My reluctant partners were quick to point out that it was all my fault. I was read the riot act. I had violated points one (always stay in control), two (people ahead of you have the right of way), three (do not stop where you obstruct a trail) and six (use proper devices to avoid runaway equipment). My lift pass was revoked, I had to

## RIDE ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE

walk to the chalet, and my mom nearly killed me for wasting twenty dollars. I still have a bump behind my ear from the errant ski.

**ACCORDING TO** Jimmie Spencer, President and CEO of the Canada West Ski Area Association, the ARC was developed in an effort to reduce the risk of injury associated with an already risky sport.

In the '70s, Canadians and Americans adapted the European FIS Safety Code to North—a huge 25-point code of conduct—to their use. To Spencer and his colleagues the essence of rules should be simplicity, so the CWSSA changed the code to eight points emphasizing safety consciousness. Later, the final two points were added to discourage alcohol and drug consumption, and remind people they must have enough dexterity to use the lifts.

"The aim of the code is to [encourage people to] be considerate and responsible on the hill," says Spencer in a regal British accent. Spencer has been instrumental in the development

of the code of ethics, national safety and operational standards. When you consider the dangers of skiing and boarding the need for safety management seems logical.

"Collisions on the hill were increasing during the '70s as more people took up skiing and interest in the sport increased. Then in the early '80s when snowboards appeared, many areas wouldn't allow them. Those young guys on snowboards had gravitated from skateboards, so discipline was non-existent in comparison to skiers. Bad behavior on the hill is what set them apart. Being blind on one side, the opportunity for collision increased exponentially."

Enforcing safety rules on people who don't undergo training or licens-

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

## Rare skis will make you the hippest "Birdo" on the hill

### SNOW ZONE FALL LINES

Do you like to be different? Stand out from the crowd? Well, if you're craving differentiation in the skis you use then there are an incredible number of obscure ski manufactures out there, most of which I had never heard of until I stumbled across [exoticskis.com](http://exoticskis.com). Thanks to the folks at Exotic Skis, you can find out about a vast array of skis made all over the world in backyards, garages—maybe even converted meth labs.

They list 176 different items with a short bio and country of origin for each product. With some additional research I

found some very interesting facts about some of these companies. Some of them are used by World Cup Ski racers because they were involved with design, testing and ownership in the companies. There are all sorts of telemark, cross-country touring and even sky surfing (parachute skiing!) skis. Many for obvious reasons have very limited production, often only pushing out around 100 pairs per season. Some sell for over \$15,000. That would be the day! For many of these skis you can specifically design your graphics, so if you want your favourite gal laminated on the topside, you can go for it.

Some of these skis are so obscure they can't find anything out about them. Very cool. Here's a short list of just a few great names: Blossom, BumTribe, Claw, Igneous, Phantom, Revolution, Royal Chamonix. ♡

## Easy Rider SNOWBOARDS - SKATEBOARDS CONDITION REPORT

### LOCAL

Rabbit Hill — 60cm base, no new snow. All runs and lifts open. Terrain park open, with more features to be added!  
Snow Valley — 60cm base, no new snow. All runs and lifts open. Terrain park fully operational, with new features opening daily!  
Sun Ridge — 60cm base, no new snow. All runs and lifts open. Snowmaking: finished for the season.  
Edmonton Ski Club — All runs and lifts are open. Conditions: Excellent!

### ALBERTA

Castle Mountain — 71-191cm base, 10cm of new snow. 5 lifts and 50 trails open.  
Lake Louise — 107-134cm base, 25cm of new snow. All lifts and 91 runs open.  
Marmot Basin — 74cm base, 13cm of new snow. 8 lifts and 78 trails open.  
Mt. Norquay — 50-75cm base, 3cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open. Terrain park includes new hits, features and rails.  
Nakiska — 50-63cm base, 7cm of new snow. 5 lifts and 24 trails open. Monster Carpet is open!  
Sunshine Village — 133cm base, 27cm of new snow. All lifts and 94 runs open. Rogers Terrain Park now open!  
Tawatinaw — 4 lifts and 24 runs open.

### B.C.

Apex — 125cm base, 64cm of new snow. 26 runs open.  
Big White — 151cm base, 53 cm of new snow. 13 lifts and 57 runs open. Night Skiing open!  
Fernie — 112 cm base, 80cm of new snow. 9 lifts and over 100 runs open.  
Kicking Horse — 146cm base, 44cm of new snow. Great conditions!  
Kimberley — 89-104cm base, 8cm of new snow. 5 lifts and

73 trails open.  
Mt. Washington — 235cm base, 23cm of new snow. All (60) runs open.  
Panorama — 70-99cm base, 18cm of new snow. 9 lifts and 118 runs open.  
Powder King — 105-237cm base, 21cm of new snow. 41 ft. of snow per year!  
Red Mountain — 115cm base, 30cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
Revelstoke — 173cm base, 3 lifts and 23 trails open.  
Silver Star — 159cm base, 35cm of new snow. 12 lifts and 97 runs open. Terrain Park now open!  
Sun Peaks — 123cm base, 46cm of new snow. 12 lifts and 115 trails open.  
Whistler/Blackcomb — 177cm base, 71cm of new snow. 23 lifts and 87 groomed runs open.  
White Water — 189cm base, 20cm of new snow. 4 lifts and 7 runs open. Avalanche skills training on Dec. 27 & 28.

### U.S.A.

49 North — 142cm base, 38cm of new snow. 5 lifts and 66 runs open.  
Big Sky — 106cm base, 3cm of new snow.  
Crystal Mountain — 183cm base, 43 runs, 7 lifts open.  
Great Divide — 46cm base, 14 runs open.  
Lookout Pass — 190cm base, 46cm new snow.  
Mt. Spokane — 142cm base, 36cm of new snow. 4 lifts and 24 runs open.  
Schweitzer Mt. — 160cm base, 68cm of new snow. 8 lifts and 70 runs open.  
Silver Mt. Resort — 190cm base, 30cm of new snow. 6 lifts and 51 runs open.  
Sun Valley — 106cm base, 20cm of new snow. 10 lifts and 62 runs open.

All conditions accurate as of Dec. 26, 2007

## Easy Rider SNOWBOARDS - SKATEBOARDS

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## ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ing could be futile. And since the industry has grown far beyond a strong tradition of respectful skiing, a list of courtesies seems ineffectual. So how are the rules enforced?

Awareness and enforcement are mostly in the hands of the ski patrol and instructors. Bright yellow signs are posted in convenient, high traffic areas. Instructors teach the code in their lessons and patrollers must ask violators whether they know the code.

I tell Spencer the code seems overly simplistic. Rules, signs, procedures and policing are sometimes stifling in our daily lives, but we know they're there—could a code really be enough? In a refreshing yet traditional view of human responsibility, Spencer explains the lack of heavy-handedness: "We don't want to create policemen on slopes. We want fun on the hill—if there is a mistake, we want people to learn from it, but with a soft hand."

Spencer feels the threat of having a lift ticket revoked is often punishment enough. If someone continually disregards the safety of others, he or she could face banishment from that hill and others in the area. Less extreme punishments include a classroom video and hand-writing the responsibility code—punishments which are geared to attitude and demeanor of offender.

Spencer says his members wouldn't be comfortable with mandatory rules and policing. "We're strong believers in responsible behaviour." Spencer claims current code enforcement is working. In earlier decades, there were approximately 4.5 accidents per 1000 skier visits, and now there are less than two accidents per 1000. Collision rates have also decreased, to an average 200 - 250 per year from nearly 5000.

**BUT DAVID ZEMRAU**, veteran patroller at Rabbit Hill and Marmot, has a different view. He claims he has seen the number of collisions increasing—even patrollers have been hit by other riders on the hill. "A patroller was stand-

ing stationary and was hit from behind. When he came to, he was lying on the ground in the snow and the offender was gone."

Zemrau thinks injuries are less frequent due to improved equipment and use of helmets, but collisions are on the rise.

Zemrau claims people are not as aware of the code as they used to be. "People need to know there is code, and only then can it be enforced," he says. "It's like knowing you're expected to drive within the speed limit, but you don't know what the speed limit is. You can't enforce it unless people know."

Zemrau suggests people be given brochures with their passes, and even charging people who violate the code. With the sheer number of people enjoying skiing and snowboarding and the high cost of injuries and aid, it may be wise to develop stronger penalties and to give patrollers more authority to enforce the code. "Behavior is getting worse on the hill," says Zemrau. "If resorts are slow to act, people will keep getting hurt." ▽

## Black diamonds are forever

SNOW ZONE

### FALL LINES

JEREMY DERKSON  
snowzone@viveweekly.com

Ski hills and environmental advocates have a dubious, sometimes difficult relationship, but occasionally the two come together and make some magic. Robert F Kennedy's Waterkeeper Alliance—where A-list celebs descend on Sunshine to promote water conservation efforts—is one such event, raising over \$1 million in 2007 for the cause. This year's event, taking place Jan 17 - 20, promises to be another good one.

Last year, roving reporter and hobnobber extraordinaire Colin Cathrea finagled an invitation to the event and ended up skiing with (and giving some of his trademark tips to) 30 Rock's Alec

Baldwin. This year, Pierce Brosnan joins the cast. As we all know from *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, James Bond is an accomplished skier, so hopefully the former Bond Brosnan can manage without our expert, specialized assistance. Of course, that's not to suggest we aren't willing to rent ourselves out at a reasonable rate if any of the folks on the guest list—such as Kelsey Grammer, Leslie Neilson or Daryl Hannah—need a few pointers. On second thought, Hannah can have her lessons free. Tickets to the gala event (the only event open to the public) are \$500 per person or \$10 000 per table. A table nets you a celebrity guest and seats for you and eight friends, and you'll be doing a solid by helping protect watersheds in North America. After all, that's where snow comes from. Live and let ride. ▽

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# ARTS

## Book reviewing is dead! Long live the book review!

### LACK OF VENUES AND A PAUCITY OF CRITICAL WRITING ARE DIGGING THE GRAVE OF THE BOOK REVIEW

JAY SMITH / jay@vueweekly.com

'Sweet, bland commendations fall everywhere upon the scene,' Elizabeth Hardwick complained once: "a universal, if lobotomised accommodation reigns."

No, Hardwick was not speaking of Heather Reisman (aka "Chief Book Lover" of Chapters Indigo) and her gushing, saccharine reviews—for instance, Brian Mulroney's biography ("a truly fascinating story") or Elizabeth Hay's *Late Night on Air* ("a compelling story rich in human emotion"). Nor was she speaking of any of the bland, off-the-wires reviews of already-best-selling books published by the same half-dozen major publishing houses.

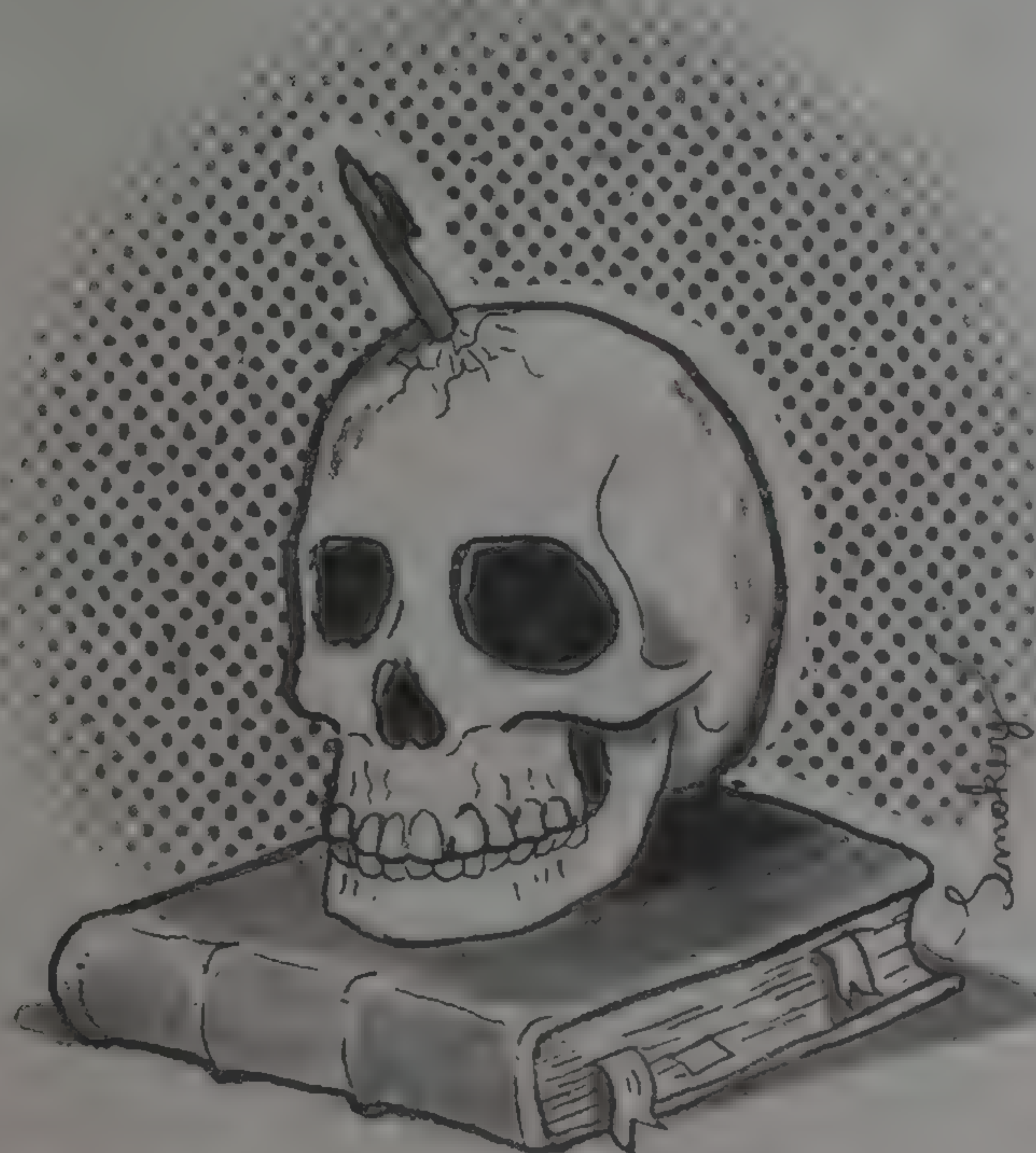
Hardwick, novelist and (eventually) acclaimed literary critic, wife of American poet Robert Lowell, wrote those words in 1959 in the pages of *Harper's Magazine*. Hardwick was neither the first, nor the last, to decry the lazy intellectual standards, tendency to unadulterated praise and lax literary standards of contemporary book reviews. In 1928, for instance, Edmund Wilson, an American literary critic, complained, "When one considers the number of reviews, the immense amount of literary journalism ... one asks oneself how it is possible for reviewing to remain so puerile."

(At least Hardwick did something about it, though: four years after she said the above quote, she started up *The New York Review of Books*, a veritable critical institution in American letters that continues publishing to this day.)

TODAY, THOUGH, these old criticisms of book reviews remain oddly resonant, with different forces conspiring to put the art of book reviewing on life-support. For one: in both Hardwick's and Wilson's era, there were plentiful venues for the publication of book reviews. Today, the number of daily newspapers that publish a book section has declined dramatically. In Canada, the *Globe and Mail*, with its Saturday book section, is considered the only paper to do anything close to a comprehensive job of reviewing the mountains of books published in Canada each year. (*Quill and Quire*, a books industry publication with a significant on-line component, is usually mentioned as the other noteworthy venue.)

"If you go on-line, you can see the trend," says Richard Helm, books editor at the *Edmonton Journal*. "The book sections are getting reduced, if not chopped altogether."

"It's a funny little dance we're



#### BOOKS

## DEATH OF THE BOOK REVIEW

obliged to do every week, as book editors," adds Helm, speaking on the balance he must maintain between representing small and large publishers, between books that have broad public appeal and those with niche markets, and many other factors. "[I get] over a hundred books a week, and, during peak season, more than that. I have room in my section to run 12 reviews on a very good weekend. In an effort to get more reviews in, we're compelled to cut back on length, at the expense of thoughtful criticism."

Helm declined to elaborate on the reasons why this is the case.

There are some with ideas, though. In an article that had overtones of the criticisms of Hardwick and Wilson—"Book coverage is not just meagre but shockingly mediocre. The pabulum that passes for most reviews is an insult to the intelligence of most readers," for example—in *The Columbia Review of Journalism* this past fall, Steve Wasserman, former editor of *The Los Angeles Times*'s book section, laid the blame on the fact that many editors permit themselves to be pressured by

"the faux populism of the marketplace."

"Only the review (or book) that is immediately understood by the greatest number of readers can be permitted to see the light of day," he writes. "Anything else smacks of 'elitism.' This is a coarse and pernicious dogma—a dogma that is at the centre of the anti-intellectual tradition that is alive and well within America's newspapers. It is why most newspapers barely bother with reviews. And it is why most newspaper reviews are not worth reading."

The anti-intellectual tradition seems to manifest elsewhere: accompanying the death of the book review is the death of reading itself. These days sooth-sayers foresee the end of literacy altogether. Consider just the title of Caleb Crain's essay in the latest issue of the *New Yorker*, for instance: "The Twilight of the Book." Meanwhile, the title of Scott Timberg's piece, published earlier this month in *The Los Angeles Times*, relied on a what seems to be an entirely ironic question mark for its hopefulness: "A dismal year for books?" Both pieces lament falling literacy levels, falling book sales and the allure of other technology.

But whereas the decreasing market share for literature over other forms

of entertainment is a wholly familiar argument, the number of reading individuals in the States, according to Wasserman, has remained relatively consistent over the past few decades in absolute numbers (about 96 million people, according to the National Endowment for the Arts), if not in percentage of the American population. The percentage of these readers who limit their reading choices to less intellectually rigorous fare, like Harlequin romances or crime fiction, however, was not recorded.

IT'S NOT SIMPLY a matter of anti-intellectualism, though: as Wasserman points out in his article, the publishing of book reviews is a fantastically unprofitable enterprise. Wasserman says that the problem is that they rely on advertising revenue from publishers, who would rather take out ads in other sections of the paper—if they take out ads at all—in order to reach a wider audience.

That's as much a fault of the newspapers as the publishers though. Wasserman points out that book sections could be made more lucrative for newspapers and other publications if they broadened their base to include products and services the relatively affluent demographic that makes up the readers of the book sec-

tion like to buy: ads for top-quality whiskeys, electronics, coffee and other luxury goods would help the bottom line. (Flip through the *Globe and Mail*'s Saturday books section and you'll notice that they have adopted some of these strategies.)

Practically, however, book reviewers (and, frankly, writers on the arts in general) are in a state of suspended animation when it comes to their own finances.

"I think the general public has the idea that reviewers are paid more than they are," says Candace Fertile, whose book reviews are widely published (including locally in the *Edmonton Journal*). She, like most book reviewers, has a day job, teaching at a BC college.

"You have to want to do it," she continues. "Getting paid \$50 for a book review is basically volunteer work. Although, to me, getting paid something is important. Too often writers are expected to give away their work." Fertile also points out that pay for freelance reviewers has not kept up with inflation

THE IDEA THAT truly critical book reviewing is a pernicious activity, a lethally parasitic growth on the otherwise immaculately saleable work of literature, doesn't help. Especially for weekly arts magazines like the one between your fingers, the ethical impetus to just support the entirely underfunded and undersupported local publishing industry is immense.

Not that the pressure necessarily comes from publishers themselves. As Lou Morin, general manager of Edmonton's NeWest Press, explains, these days simply getting a review is a good thing, regardless of what it actually says.

"Every time we see a review published, a little cheer goes up in the office," says Morin. "Book reviews are of utmost importance in terms of getting the word out. A good review can really increase interest in a book, and pique the curiosity of readers to go to a bookstore or library. It's really a key marketing tool."

NeWest publishes 12 books a year, says Morin, and that getting half a dozen reviews for a given title is "doing really well."

Though Morin doesn't have a solution for getting more reviews published, she does think it's vital we find a way to increase not only the number of reviews, but the critical discourse within them.

"For our whole literary community," she says, "reviews are essential to get people thinking and talking and reading." ▽

# Stewart's euro-chic winds down the year

PAUL BLINOV / blinov@vnewweekly.com

Considering the way Davina Stewart talks about her Euro-chic alter ego Irmengarde, you'd think the two were sisters. Little jokes and jabs conceal the fact that Irmengarde is really a character Stewart's created, not a flesh-and-blood relative. All the same, Stewart's content to talk about her fondly, as though she might walk by the window of the Next Act at any moment and make a face.

"[Irmengarde]'s always around," Stewart laughs. "She's famous for being famous; I don't think there's any of these people around anymore. Before the Paris Hiltons, y'know ... they were entertaining, you wanted to hang out with them. Always a good time; always just back from some fabulous thing, going to the next fabulous thing."

Irmengarde is eponymously hosting her **Year End Wrap Up** at the Varscona Theatre. The variety show will feature guests, panels, best-of lists and predictions for 2008. Stewart's elusive about the still-in-the-air guest list, but according to her, that's one of the perks of having the show fall over the festive break.

"There will be exotic Edmontonians jetsetting in for the holidays. We'll ask them to be on the show," she hints.

**THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME** Irmengarde's hosted a New Years shin-dig, nor is the talk show format new to Edmonton. While Oh Susanna carries the flag with a monthly talk show, Irmengarde's been cropping up since Susanna's predecessors, Johnny and Poki, originally graced the stage.

"We needed to pay the rent for the Varscona, and we knew how to put on a show," she explains. "So we started putting on a show, and we did it every week. We kept the lights on, and the water on and the door open, [and] we had fun doing it; it was a great way to spend Saturday



**PREVIEW** MON, DEC 31 (8 PM)  
**IRMENGARDE'S  
NEW YEAR'S WRAP UP**  
VARSCONA THEATRE (10328 - 83 AVE), \$12

night. Suddenly we'd been doing it for a few years."

"Oh Susanna's a late-night, 11 o'clock show, [while] Irmengarde's a prime time 8 o'clock. So a little more family," she adds.

Unlike most other New Year's events in town, this one will be all wrapped up before the clock strikes 12, giving audiences the chance to partake in another evening event. But

the way Stewart describes it, they might not want to leave so soon.

"The New Year's party is really fun. You don't have to come in a large group, you can come on your own," she says. "The Varscona is its own family, and the audience is part of the family. I think it's really important that people know that. You're part of the group when you're there."

And Irmengarde is really a part of Stewart, even after she's left the stage and resumed Davina status. Like a bratty sister, Irmengarde's always trailing close behind.

"I shop for Irmengarde quite a bit," she laughs. "Sparkly, shiny things." ▼

# Vaudevillian New Year's Eve for pros and scenesters alike

PAUL BLINOV / blinov@vnewweekly.com

If you've ever had trouble picking a party to ring in the new year, John Armstrong knows how you feel: performers like him also have to shop around for an end of year gig to play at. In fact, the trouble of finding a show is how Armstrong's **Vaudevillian New Year's Eve** celebration came to be.

"It would've been four years ago that Bill Bourne, myself, Tippy Agogo, and I think Wendy McNeil were all trying to find a gig for New Years," he explains. "There [were] so few bars doing live entertainment four years ago, [and] we couldn't find a gig. Not one of us."

"There was a time when New Year's was a big pay day for a lot of musicians. A band would make a couple of thousand dollars performing on New Year's Eve, so everyone was going home with a nice pay cheque. That doesn't seem to happen much anymore. There's maybe a few gigs like that, but there's a lot of bands going for them. We don't play bars that much anymore, so we basically had to build our own New Year's Eve show to have a gig."

Coming up short for a space to play, Armstrong and Bourne, who were performing in *The Christmas Carol Project* at the time, asked the Roxy if they could whip up a show to put on in its space. One year later, the first Vaudevillian New Year's Eve rang in Jan 1 with an eclectic mix of dance, music and, of course, a countdown and champagne toast.

This year, Bourne, Agogo, musical act the Red Deers and dance groups Mile Zero Dance and the KO Dance Project will all be taking their respective turn on the stage, while Armstrong covers the improvised visual projections that accompany the acts. And as this third annual show draws closer, Armstrong seems satisfied with the mixed type of audiences that have shown up to its predecessor performances.

"There's anything from young scenesters—who know they can throw down sleeping bags in the front row and dance, and do whatever they'd like—to older professionals who maybe are aware of it because they've been to the *Christmas Carol Project* and we advertise in the pro-



**PREVIEW** MON, DEC 31 (8 PM)  
**VAUDEVILLIAN  
NEW YEAR'S EVE**  
FEATURING BILL BOURNE, TIPPY AGOGO, THE RED DEERS, MILE ZERO DANCE, KO DANCE PROJECT  
ROXY THEATRE (10708-124 STREET), \$30

gram."

**THE AUDIENCE** isn't stuck in the chairs for the entire show, however. Come midnight, everyone's invited up onstage to revel in the coming of 2008. Performer and audience member alike get to celebrate together.

"I guess for us, this is our version of a house party," Armstrong says. "It's big enough that we can set up a PA, and take turns entertaining each other, and ring in the New Year together."

It's best to be among friends when the ball drops, after all: the New Year's countdown is a splendid celebration, but Armstrong knows that even if you have the last gig of the year; it doesn't always come off flawlessly.

"I did one New Year's party [where] I was onstage playing, and had my same little clock with this little dial you can use to change the time. I'm up there with the band, and it's a minute-and-a-half to go," he recalls. "So I signal to the singer, 'We're almost there,' and he gives the guitarist a solo, then comes back in with a verse. We hit the chorus, and it's a double-chorus out, and I'm watching the clock in horror as it goes past midnight, and goes all the way down. The song ends at 40 seconds after midnight, so I pick up the clock, and [twist] the dial. The minute hand goes back one minute and I go, '40 seconds to midnight!'" ▼

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# 'The virtual builds an appetite for the real'

## E-BOOKS WON'T REPLACE THE PHYSICALITY OF READING, SAYS TED BISHOP

JAY SMITH / jay@vnewweekly.com

This past fall, when Amazon announced the release of the Kindle, the latest (and most mass-marketed) incarnation of the electronic book reader, the mainstream reaction was rather unanimously delighted. In Steven Levy's enthusiastic cover article in the Nov 17 *Newsweek*, he gushed about how Kindle's "E Ink" screen technology meant that Kindle, unlike a computer screen, can be read in any light conditions. (This, previously, was one of the major challenges with e-book readers.) Levy boasted about how Amazon offers new Kindle books for \$9.99, which is (obviously) significantly less than the cover price for a newly released hardcover.

Levy and his technophilic brethren project that the Kindle will (despite its \$400 price tag) lure would-be readers from the television or the internet and back to the printed word. Reading, they cry with visions of iPods in their heads, will suddenly be fashionable again! Out-of-print books will be widely available again. Writers will be compelled to write "in progress" works available to subscribers over Kindle's wireless connectivity. A new age will dawn.

### ARTS | E-BOOKS

Literacy will reign.

Beyond the techophilic cheerleaders, however, much of the reaction to the first viably mass marketed e-book reader was less monomaniacal. Not surprisingly, it's the people who actually read books, (aka "book lovers"), who point out that, in its 500-odd years of existence, the book has proven itself as just about ideal technology. Books are portable, battery-free, durable, exchangeable (Kindle is armed to its electronic teeth with anti-piracy technology to prevent the sharing of e-books) and fairly economical (especially secondhand).

Plus, books are aesthetically pleasing: they make great wallpaper on a bookcase, and can function as paperweights, file folders or beloved desk clutter. A bookshelf is, moreover, a visual mnemonic. Books absorb experience: scents and coffee stains, scrawling annotations, scratches and dog-ears. And, of course, there's the physical aspect of reading.

*Vue Weekly* spoke with Ted Bishop, author of the Governor General's

Award-nominated *Riding with Rilke* and professor in the University of Alberta's English Department, about the e-book. In *Riding with Rilke*, Bishop touches upon the physicality of reading; additionally, he's in the midst of writing a new book on ink, the embodiment of text.

**Vue Weekly:** So what's your take on the e-book?

**Ted Bishop:** I've looked at some of them; they still aren't close enough to the book for me. I know that I'm old school, but I've talked to my students. Even my 18-year-olds seem to agree that the kind of books that are good for e-books are encyclopedias and dictionaries—books that you consult. I still haven't found someone who has read a whole book online, handheld or anything else.

**VW:** So you don't think that the e-book will signal the end of the printed volume?

**TB:** The one obvious thing is that people thought that the radio would be replaced by the television, but it wasn't. We have satellite radio and web radio, but we still have radio. What was once a dominant technology became less dominant, but it didn't disappear.

**VW:** Several years ago, there was a lecture series on the physicality of books hosted by the English department ...

**TB:** Yes, it was "On Fondling Books." I organized it. I wanted something that would let people address the physical book and how the physicality of the book is part of its meaning.

It's something that I talk about in *Riding With Rilke*: I keep coming back to my encounter with Virginia Woolfe's suicide note. I called it the "archival jolt"—seeing the thing itself. Since I wrote about that, a number of people have come to me with the same experience while reading old books or old maps. A lot of people have talked about, for instance, how they hate reading books with movie stills on the cover. All of these things are aspects of reading that can't be reduced to text on a screen.

**VW:** Since you're a fan of the physical experience of books, what kind of books do you actually like reading?

**TB:** I like the idea of hardcover books, but when it comes to reading them, I actually prefer paperbacks. Not small and nasty ones, but nice ones. I like books I don't need to feel intimidated by, that I can chuck into a bag, put

into the pocket of my parka. I had an old Gortex jacket with a pocket that I could put a book into. Eventually, I had to buy a new one, but this one had slash pockets. They were the same capacity as the old pockets, but I couldn't put books into it. And I never bonded with that jacket.

**VW:** I think men's jackets are easier for that. I've only ever found one coat that actually fit a "pocket book." And I was so happy that I could carry around my pocket books in my coat pocket.

**TB:** When you're stuck in line or something, it's great being able to have a book there. These kinds of things become important, the more we move into the digital sphere. I make all my students type on a 1949 typewriter. No one's ever any good at it—no one can type 'a' because their pinkies are too weak.

Then this one Humanities Computing student came up and she [was a whiz]. It turns out that she spends all day in the computer pod and when she gets home, to let off steam, she types on a manual typewriter. I told the head of HUCO, Stan Roiker, about this. He was surprised that I was surprised. And he said, "Of course. The virtual builds an appetite for the real." ▽

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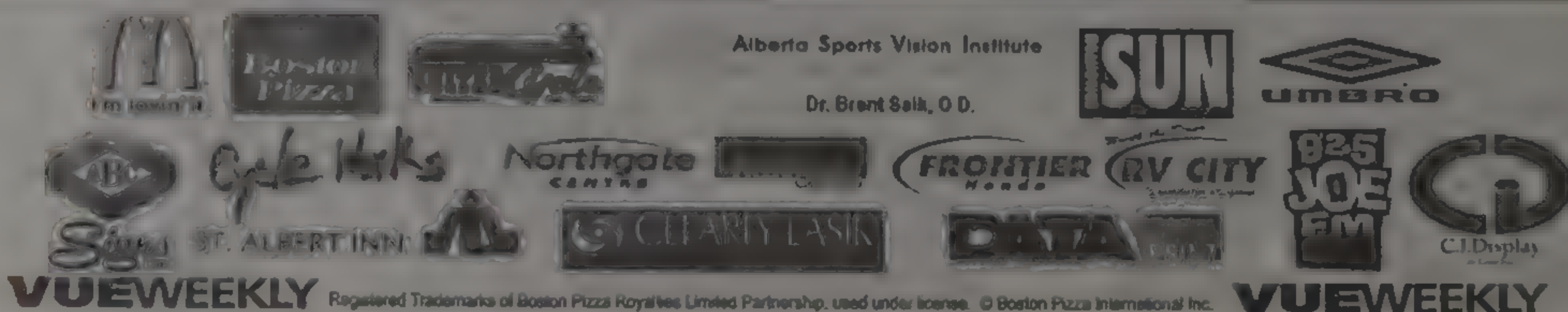
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14. Steve Earle – Washington Square Serenade (new west)
15. The Sadies – New Seasons (outside)
16. Samantha Schultz – Both Sides (samantha schultz)
17. Buck 65 – Situation (warner)
18. Mark Knopfler – Kill To Get Crimson (mercury)
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21. Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings – 100 Days 100 Nights (daptone)
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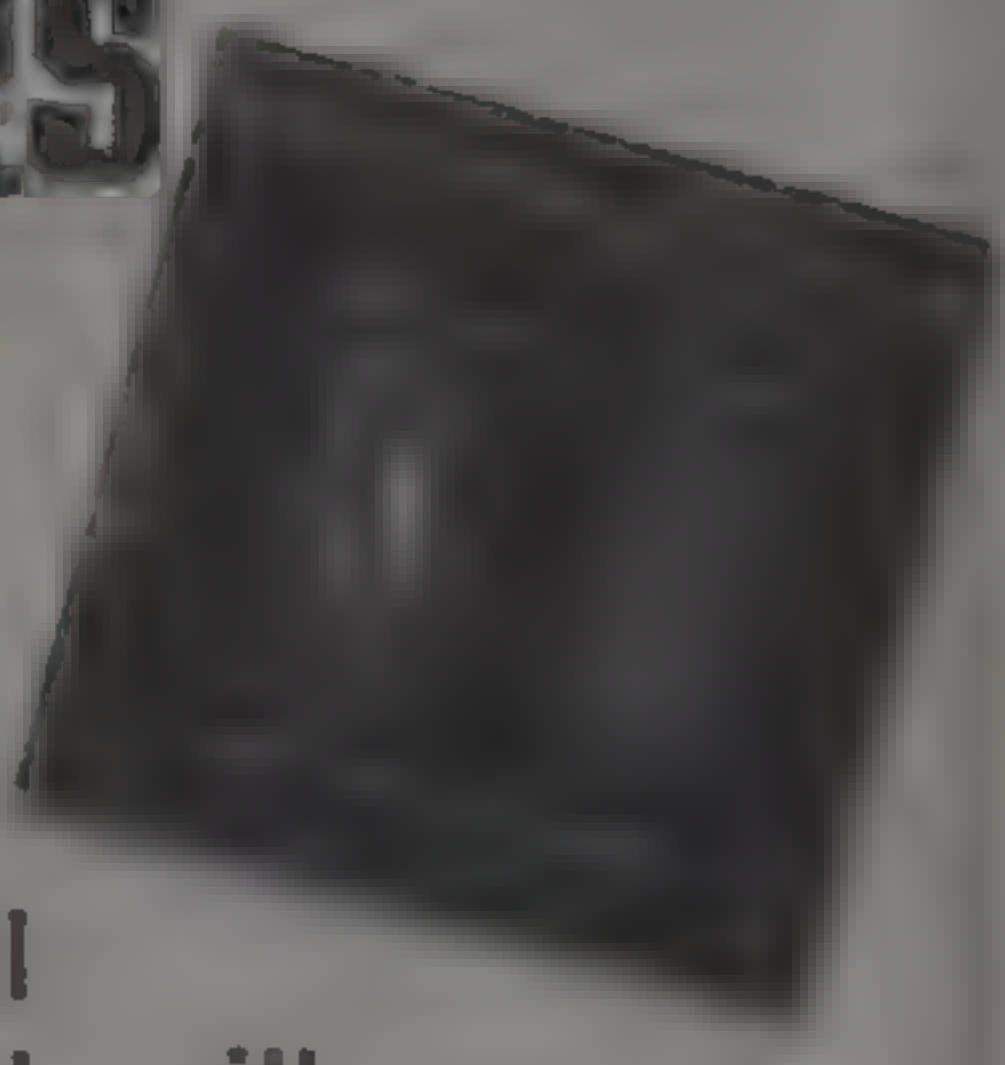


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**THE ARTERY** 9535 Jasper Ave • *TOWARDS SEEING EVERYTHING*: Photographs by Ted Kerr • Until Jan. 4

**ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA** Enterprise Square, 100, 10230 Jasper Ave (422-6223) • Open Mon-Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm (4-8pm free); Sat-Sun 11am-5pm • Drop-In Tours: Sat and Sun (12:30, 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30pm) • *FUN HOUSE*: Artworks explore the idea of constructed illusion, trompe l'oeil, false reality and faux finish; until Jan. 6 • *THE 1950s FORD SHOW*: drawings of a 1950 Ford from memory; until Jan. 6 • *NEW ACQUISITIONS*: Curated by Catherine Crowston; until Feb. 17 • *F.H. VARLEY: PORTRAITS INTO THE LIGHT*: Portraits by one of the Group of Seven; until Feb. 17 • Members free; \$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student); \$5 (6-12yrs)/free (5yrs and under)/\$20 (family—2 adults, 4 children)

**ARTISANAL STUDIO GALLERY** 111 707, 707 St. (423-2966/439-9532) • Open Thu (5-8pm) or by appointment (except Dec. 27, closed for Christmas) • 11404: Artworks by Monica Pitre, Gillian Willans, Andrea Pinheiro and guests • Until Jan. 17

**CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA** 95 Ave • Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sat: 10am-5pm • Group show featuring artworks by the artist members • Until Feb. 15

**FRINGE GALLERY** Paint Spot basement, 10618 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Artworks by Tom Yorkes • Through January

**GALLERY AT MILLER-STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY** Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Sq (496-7030) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-9pm; Sat 9am-6pm; Sun 1-5pm • *ORIGINS*: Group show by recent BFA grads; until Dec. 31 • *BUILDING FACADES OF SMALL TOWN ALBERTA*: Photographs by Darren Gust; Jan. 2-30

**ELLENBSE HOSPITAL MEZZANINE GALLERY AND BLUE CURVE GALLERY** 10230-111 Ave • Open 7:30am-2:30pm • *THE CANADIAN FILIPINO CONNECTION*: Recent prints and paintings by Gordon Snyder • *THE USEFUL LESSONS OF PLANTS*: Recent encaustic paintings by Marlena Wyman • Until Jan. 12

**HARCOURT HOUSE** 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **Main Gallery**: *BETWEEN THE LINES: DIGITIZED DIALECTS AND ENCODED TRADITIONS*: Artworks by multi-media indigenous artist Jude Norris; Jan. 10-Feb. 16 • **Front Room**: *SPACEFARERS OF THE EXPANSE*: Artworks – a mythological universe by Tony Baker; Jan. 10-Feb. 16 • Opening reception: Thu, Jan. 10 (7-10pm), both artists will be in attendance • Artist lectures: by Jude Norris and Tony Baker; Sat, Jan. 12 (1pm)

**JEFF ALLEN GALLERY** Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Thu 9am-4pm • *CHRISTMAS SHOW AND SALE*: Paintings, fibre art, wood work and pottery by various artists • Until Jan. 2

**JOHNSON GALLERY (NORTH)** 11817-80 St (479-8424) Open Tue-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • *CHRISTMAS ART FAIR*: Artworks by gallery artists, Ceramic art collectables from Clay Works by Heather Goldmirc; through December • **JOHNSON GALLERY (SOUTH)** 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 10am-5pm • *ALBERTA OIL PAINTER'S STUDIO*: Paintings by artists-in-residence Susan Abma, Susan Box, David Brooks, Shari Honey, Margaret Klappstien, Tracey Mardon, Anne McCormick, Cindy Revell; through December

**THE LOFT GALLERY** A.J. Ottewell Arts Centre, 590 Broadmoor Blvd. Sherwood Park (449-4443) • Open. Thu 5-9pm; Sat 10am-4pm • Artworks by Deanna Corrigan, Christine Allard, Kaye Ackerman, JoAnn Rasmussen, Mary Deepröse, and Janice Bonsant Wilson, and Lynda McAmmond • Until Jan. 5

**McMULLEN GALLERY** U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-8pm • *FOUR OUTSIDE VIEWS*: Landscape paintings by Pam Wilman, Adeline Rockett, Sophia-Podryhula-Shaw, and Donna Miller • Until Feb. 10

**MCPAG** 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-4pm; Sun 10am-6:30pm • Artworks by the SWCA, Society of Western Canadian Artists; until Jan. 17 • **Dining Room Gallery**: Paintings by Mary Paranych; until Jan. 3

**MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM** 5 Ste Anne St, St. Albert (459-1528) • *PRINCESS LOUISE—AWOMAN OF SUBSTANCE*: An exhibit about Princess Louise Alberta, the daughter of Queen Victoria and namesake of our province • Until Feb. 17

**NONA MACGILLIVRAY GALLERY FOR THE ARTS** Stroll Gallery, 9704-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open: Mon, Wed, Fri 9:30am-2:30pm; Tue, Thu 9:30am-4pm and 6-8pm • *UNDER THE INFLUENCE* • Until Dec. 31

**PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY** 10183-112 St (465-2162) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm or by appointment Sun-Mon 11am-5pm • *FIREWORKS—SILVER AND STEEL*: New sculptures by Isla Burns and works by silversmith Karen Cantine • Until Jan. 5

**PETER ROBERTSON GALLERY 2** 12304 Jasper Ave (455-7479) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • Artworks by Alice Teichert, Phil Danrah, Peter von Tiesenhausen, David Janzen, David Cantine, Linda Lindemann, Jonathan Forrest, David Alexander

**PORTAL GALLERY** 9414-91 St (702-7522) • Open Tue-Fri 12-8pm; Sat 12-7pm • **MEDLEY FIELDS**: Artworks by Giselle Denis • Until Dec. 31

**PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 19 Perron St, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-8pm) • *WINDOWS*: Artworks by Terry Reynoldson • Jan. 10-Feb. 29 • Opening reception: Thu, Jan. 10 (7-9pm)

**THE RED GALLERY** 9621 Whyte Ave (498-1984) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • Closed over Christmas • *3 RIVERS - THE ARNO, THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN AND THE PEMBINA*: Large oil paintings by Christl Bergstrom with smaller paintings • Jan. 11-31

**ROWLES AND COMPANY** 10130-103 St, Mezz (426-4035) • *URBANSCAPES*: Paintings by Pauline Ulliach. Featuring paintings and sculptures by various artists

**SNAP GALLERY** 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • **Main Gallery**: Printworks by Patrick Bulas based on looking at theoretical phenomena in scientific journals as well as his personal experience • Jan. 10-Feb. 23 • Opening reception: Thu, Jan. 10 (7pm)

**THE STUDIO GALLERY** 11 Perron St (460-5993) • Open Thu 12-8pm, Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-5pm • *RECESSES*: Paintings by Daniel vanHeyst • Opening reception: Sat, Jan. 5 (1-4pm), artist in attendance • Jan. 5-26

**TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE** 11211-142 St (452-9100) • *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE SCIENCE KIND*: interactive feature exhibit • *LEGO—CHRISTMAS EXPRESS*: Daily display • *Christmas Under the Dome*: Laser shows in the Margaret Zeidler Star Theatre; until Jan. 6 • *The IMAX Nutcracker*: until Jan. 6; daily (11am) • Observatory hours: Sat, Sun, holidays (1-4pm); Fri-Sun (7-10pm)

**VAAA GALLERY** 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • Mon-Fri 10am-4pm; Sat 12-4pm • *MAELSTROM*: Artworks by Eugenia Castenada • Jan. 10-Feb. 16 • Opening reception: Jan. 10 (7-9 30pm)

**URBAN ROOTS** 10418 Whyte Ave (438-7978) • *COLLECTION*: Artworks by Oksana Movchan • Until Feb. 2

### LITERARY

**BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ** 9624-76 Ave (469-8755) • Story Slam: An opportunity for writers to share their work, explore their talents and show off • 3rd Wed each month • \$5 (donation)

**STEEPS TEA LOUNGE** College Plaza, 11116-82 Ave • Spoken word open mic; last Wed each month

**TALES—THE ALBERTA LEAGUE ENCOURAGING STORYTELLING** • 1st Floor, Grill, 10475-80 Ave (932-4409) • Story Cafés: Mavericks: open mic opportunity • 1st Thu each month; 7-9pm

**TALES—THE ALBERTA LEAGUE ENCOURAGING STORYTELLING** (437-9555) • City Arts Centre, 10943-84 Ave; Monthly Storytelling Circle: Everyone welcome to tell stories or to come and listen; 2nd Fri each month through to June 2008 (8pm); \$3 admission, first time free

**3 BANANAS CAFÉ** Sir Winston Churchill Sq • WOW—Wired on Words: We all have something to say, amateurs and professionals alike. Let this creative writing process guide you into self-discovery • Meetings bi-monthly, Sun (4-6pm) for info e-mail feelgoodbewellin2007@gmail.com

**UPPER CRUST CAFÉ** 10909-86 Ave (422-8216) •

The Poets' Haven Monday Nights weekly reading series presented by Stroll of Poets • Every Mon Night (7pm) • \$5 (door) • Mon, Jan. 7 featuring the spoken word artists, Pritham Atwal, Hugh McAlary, Michael Penny, and Connie Lloyd

### LIVE COMEDY

**THE CARROT** 9351-118 Ave (471-1580) • Improv at the Carrot with Jana O'Connor and Troupe • Jan. 4

**THE COMEDY FACTORY** 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu (8:30pm), \$11; Fri (8:30pm), \$20; Sat (8pm), \$20; Sat (10:30pm), \$20 • Every Wed (8:30pm): Wacky Wednesday; \$5 • Tommy Sauitt; Dec. 27-29 • Brian Work; Jan. 4-5

**THE COMIC STRIP** 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St (483-5999) • Open nightly 8pm, Fri 8pm and 10:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm, Sun 8pm • Hit or Miss Mondays • The fast pace high energy styles of Matt Sadler, also appearing Derick Lengwenus, Lars Callieou; until Dec. 30 • New Year's extravaganza: 2 shows one at 7pm and the other at 10pm, featuring Matt Sadler, Derick Lengwenus and Lars Callieou. Buffet and show packages available, complimentary champagne and party favours to bring in the New Year laughing; Mon, Dec. 31

**HORIZON STAGE** 1001 Calahoo Road, Spruce Grove (962-8995) • An evening of skits, stories from the comedy team of John Dunswoth (Mr. Lahey) and Patrick Roach (Randy) of the hit Showcase series *Trailer Park Boys*, and their guest Jonathan Torrens (J-Roc) • Thu, Jan. 10; Fri, Jan. 11 (sold out) • \$20 (student/senior)/\$25 (adults); adult content, no one under the age of 16 admitted at the Horizon Stage box office

**YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABARET** Londonderry Mall (481-9857) • Open Wed-Thu 8pm, Fri-Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Sun: Industry Night; \$10 • Paul Sveen, Sean Lecomber, and Kerry Unger; Dec. 27-29 • New Year's Eve with Joey Elias from Montreal; \$90 (dinner and show)/\$45 (show only), incl. party favours, a glass of champagne at midnight; Dec. 31

### THEATRE

**THE AMAZE-O-NAUTS** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (439-7939) • Bedlam Theatre Concern presents James Hamilton and Catherine Walsh's dark romantic comedy, directed by James Hamilton, and starring Ryan Hughes, Matthew Kloster, and Catherine Walsh • Gideon Baron and his wife, the Baroness, are super villain scientists whose sole objective is to destroy their arch nemeses, the Amaze-o-nauts • Jan. 3-12 (8pm, Sat matinees 2pm)

**DESPERATE HOUSEHOLDS** Theatre, 8882-170 St (484-2424) • On Hysteria Lane the houses, the lawns and the gardens are perfect. This is a look at life behind the walls of a gated, bedroom community where affairs, scandals, music, murder, dance, intrigue, food and deception exist—all the elements for an amazing block party • Until Jan. 20

**DIE-NASTY** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • Improv soap opera will begin the new season with a brand new theme • Every Mon (8pm)

**LANGUAGE AND CONTENT** Jekyll and Hyde Pub, 10610-100 Ave (297-3675) • Image Theatre's monthly reading series • Last Monday each month (7pm door, 8pm show) • Pay-what-you-can (suggested donation \$5)

**THE MIGHTY CARLINS** Third Space, 11516-103 St (477-5955/420-1757) • Workshop West Theatre • By Collin Doyle • This hilarious and heartbreaking production features the Carlin family as they deal with grief the best way they can...a lot of beer, bickering and bonding • Jan. 10-20 (Tue-Sun 8pm) • \$23 (adult)/\$18 (student/senior); Tue, Jan. 15 pay-what-you-can; tickets available at TIX on the Square, 420-1757, door

**PEACE, LOVE AND ROCK 'N' ROLL** Mayfield Dinner Theatre, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Written and compiled by Will Marks. Take a wild ride back to the swingin' '60s, celebrate the Twist, the Watusi, the British Invasion, the Beach Boys, Motown and the mini skirt • Until Feb. 17 • \$59-\$89 (buffet and show)

**SOUTH PACIFIC (THE MUSICAL)** Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park (449-3378/464-2852) • Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, and based on the book by Oscar Hammerstein II and Joshua Logan adapted from James Michener's novel *Tales of the South Pacific* • Until Jan. 5 • \$27 (adult)/\$16 (child) at Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

**10 DAYS OF MADNESS...PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL** (492-4215) • Presented by the University of Alberta Bookstores with Alberta Playwrights Network. Ten days where the playwrights are the stars. This year features guest playwrights, Frank Moher and Mansel Robinson along with a series of play readings by local playwrights associated with Alberta Playwrights Network • Free admission to all events • Jan. 11-20, public events are happening every day of the festival

# Burton's *Barber* misses the blood and guts of Sondheim's original

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vviewweekly.com

**D**rops of blood intermingle with soot-coloured rain falling over a cozily computerized Victorian London in the opening moments of the latest product from director Tim Burton's well-oiled brand of overly art-directed middlebrow Goth.

Soon the camera will fly through narrow streets of cartoon grime, an homage to Dickensian squalour minus any details that convey genuine disease or discomfort. Little critters will crawl in and out of cute-looking meat pies made by a fetching, boobilicious widow with beguiling wide eyes and carefully arranged rat's nest hair. All of this is photographed in a manner characterized by odd contradictions, the images at once garish and drab, fussed over and neglected-looking. I guess this is what happens when Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* is plucked from the shadowy magic of the theatre and juiced with a multi-million dollar movie budget: though shifted into an ostensibly more realistic, less artificial format, this morbid tale has become strangely bloodless.

Which isn't to say that the movie isn't ever any fun. Sondheim's acclaimed musical concerns a vengeful barber who assumes a habit of slitting the stubbled throats of Londoners while his pie-baking companion feeds the ground-up remains to an unwittingly cannibalistic public. With such a grisly premise to usher through the

MUSICAL

NOW PLAYING  
**SWEENEY TODD:  
THE DEMON BARBER OF  
FLEET STREET**

DIRECTED BY TIM BURTON  
WRITTEN BY JOHN LOGAN  
STARRING JOHNNY DEPP, HELENA BONHAM  
CARTER, ALAN RICKMAN, TIMOTHY SPALL

★★★

adaptation process, perhaps it should come as no surprise that the story has lost much of its truly chilling resonance on its way to the big screen. Robbed of their darker attributes, a number of key scenes feel flat and overlong even though the story's been compressed and many songs eliminated or trimmed down. Yet there are, however, a number of smaller pleasures to be found here that will likely delight holiday audiences.

**THE EMPHASIS** on creaking gears, springs, trap doors and other machinery in the barber's busy little slaughterhouse makes for an enjoyably sly commentary on the tandem progress of efficiency and dehumanization in the post-industrial world. Once they get into the swing of things, Sweeney (Johnny Depp, once again with scissors in hand, sporting Burton's obligatory pallor and a flamboyant grey streak to rival Susan Sontag) and Mrs Lovett (Helena Bonham Carter, fashioned as a corseted Souixsie Souix) enjoy the fluidity of a well-maintained assembly line, with fresh victims slid-



ing directly from the barber's chair and down a hole into the dank basement where they are swiftly churned into hamburger and baked in the ever-roaring furnace. The whimsical flopping of corpses upon contact with the earthen floor is among the movie's most striking visual gags.

Despite the general lack of strong voices to deliver Sondheim's wildly intricate melodies—Depp in particular has trouble getting across Sweeney's fiendish glee with his sour face and limited singing abilities, though his Bowie-esque quaver is kind of endearing—several members of the talented cast give amusing performances.

As always, Bonham Carter, Bur-

ton's all-too-devoted spouse, provides many of the highlights. She comes closest to balancing the necessary abstract or theatrical quality of the source material with the more intimate emotional nuances one can conjure for the movie cameras, and it helps that Lovett's longing for Sweeney gives her some strong subtext to play with. Sacha Baron Cohen, playing a deliciously foppish counterfeit Italian and rival for Sweeney's business, mustachioed and marvelously pretentious, also provides some nice moments, going for broke in his brief comic cameo and his blue satin pants.

Anyway, I can keep combing

through my memories of *Sweeney Todd* for more nice things to say about it, but the bottom line is that the whole thing is just surprisingly forgettable, even as you're watching it. There seems to be no desire to implicate the viewer in the building violence, no drive to forge a deeper investment in the deliciously grotesque underpinnings in Sondheim's tale, only a superficial interest in its nifty vestiges. Burton—who, if you ask me, has yet to better *Ed Wood*—has apparently been dreaming of this project for the last 20 years or so. That's really an awfully long time to go without ever asking yourself what the thing is really all about. ▼

## Tripping René Laloux's *Fantastic Planet* on new DVD

FLICKS

DVDetective

JOSEF BRAUN  
dvdetective@vviewweekly.com

I suppose it's only natural that when the holidays come, with their particular mixture of forbidding weather and spare time, one gets cravings for childish things, for the comfort of images and stories that allow for curling up before the boob tube and bringing back some sense of raw wonder. So it is that every year around this time I find myself itching to see *Fantastic Planet* (*La Planète Sauvage*) again, that infinitely strange 1973 Franco-Czech co-production that knocked me out when I first saw it as a kid and continues to fascinate me with its sheer imaginative prowess as an adult.

Winner of the Special Jury Prize at Cannes, and the first animated film to ever be considered for such an honour, *Fantastic Planet* made an unprecedented impact upon its initial release, though its handful of ele-

ments that are inappropriate for kids—like the nudity, philosophical digressions and rampant death—probably handicapped it in terms of its staying power in the cartoon canon. Neither an easily digestible family film nor a raunchy, Ralph Bakshi sort of R-rated film, it hovers in its own bizarre little universe, slowly nurturing its small cult following, which will hopefully continue to grow with the release of Accent Cinema's nicely supplemented new DVD.

Narrated by Terr, an Om captured by Draags as a baby before escaping back into the wild as a teenager, *Fantastic Planet* introduces us to a Bosch-inspired world where the dominant air of creepy tranquility is constantly punctuated by acts of thoughtless violence. The Oms are basically humans like us, living in desperation and squalour in the fleshy foliage outside of the Draag civilization. The Draags are, or at least appear to be, superior beings, vaguely fish-like humanoids crazy for protracted meditation sessions, hairless, svelte, soft-spoken beings that tower high over the Oms, using them only

for the amusement of their children and resorting to exterminating them when they become inconvenient.

What's initially so compelling about the whole set-up is just how counterintuitive it all feels to the conventional hippy ideology of the day, with the Draags not coming across as obviously evil but rather radiating intelligence, reason and above all a Zen-like calm. During his daily meditation ritual, a Draag's pupils vanish and a small version of his body appears inside a floating bubble, which finally takes to the sky where it drifts amidst countless others, trippy as all hell. The Oms, in comparison, live under constant threat from their hostile surroundings, not only from Draags but a fanciful bestiary of malicious, carnivorous plants, worms, vaginal orifices and winged things, not to mention each other, since they've divided themselves into warring factions and maintain fear and prejudice toward Oms that have been raised in captivity, like Terr, the outsider who will come to be their saviour.

**BASED ON A NOVEL** by Czech fantasist Stefan Wul and adapted by director René Laloux and graphic designer Roland Topor (probably best known these days for writing the novel upon which Roman Polanski's *The Tenant* was based), *Fantastic Planet* invites any number of allegorical readings—what with the importance of knowledge and tools reaching the weaker beings, I suppose a Marxist take is probably the best fit—though no single such reading can fully interpret every layer of writhing weirdness on display. What I remember taking away from the film as a kid was mostly just a sense that anyone can be good or bad, right or wrong, depending on the context, and that any organized struggle needs a hero at the centre to speak the truths that no one wants to hear. I also just remember watching the film and feeling afterwards that absolutely everything is scary, even my mom's fake ferns.

The DVD features another similarly

superb Laloux-Topor collaboration from 1965 entitled *Les Escargots*, as well as a pretty so-so music video from Sean Lennon inspired by *Fantastic Planet*. What I found most interesting here was a 25-minute featurette mostly comprised of interview footage with the late Laloux. An unsurprisingly eccentric guy—he declares that what the movie world needs most is a more “schizophrenic cinema”—Laloux tells terrific stories about the events that changed his life, such as meeting the equally insane Topor and getting a job at a clinic for the mentally ill, where he made his first animated films in collaboration with the patients. He also articulates the differences between the unique sort of animation we see in *Fantastic Planet* and the sort we commonly see today, a distinction largely characterized by emphasizing quality of graphics over fluidity of movement. And maybe this goes some way to explaining why *Fantastic Planet* still lingers with me after all these years: its imagery is just so rich. ▼

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# QUICK REVIEWS FILM CAPSULES

## NOW PLAYING

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR**  
DIRECTED BY MIKE NICHOL  
WRITTEN BY AARON SORKIN  
BASED ON THE BOOK BY GEORGE CRILE  
STARRING TOM HANKS, JULIA ROBERTS,  
PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN

DAVID BERRY / [david@vuwweekly.com](mailto:david@vuwweekly.com)

It's one thing to be sanctimonious, but it's entirely another to be sanctimonious to cap two hours of utter glorification of the thing you're preaching against. By the time screenwriter Aaron Sorkin and director Mike Nichol flash a quote from the real Charlie Wilson about how America messed up the end game in Afghanistan, the hypocrisy is so thick you could practically choke on it.

*Charlie Wilson's War* is, as you're no doubt aware, based on the true story of a United States congressman who essentially single-handedly drummed up the money necessary for America's covert support of the Afghani mujahideen in their war with the Soviet Union. It's a feel-good story of how good, ol' fashioned American git-r-done helped bring down the Soviet empire—and, oh yeah, helped arm and train some

of the people who eventually became the foot soldiers of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, two fundamentalist organizations who have had a little bit to do with recent American history.

Though they obviously acknowledge this, Sorkin and Nichol hardly treat this as a cautionary tale—at least, not until the last five minutes or so, when they make a gloriously hypocritical attempt to chide the people who listened to Charlie Wilson when he wanted guns in Afghanistan but not when we wanted schools. That message would be far better taken if the two hadn't just spent the entire film making both war and war-funding seem like an endless cocktail party—oh, except for one scene where Nichol makes gunning down Afghani civilians look like a video game, complete with beautiful women, plenty of whiskey and sexy, sexy Stinger missiles (then, to cap it, they finally bring in the bureaucracy scenes for the post-war rebuilding effort). If Sorkin and Nichol are really that upset with people who'd rather buy bullets than books, they should stop making bullets seem so fucking! awesome!

The rank hypocrisy would probably be easier to swallow if Nichol were actually more effective at pulling off the witty, glamorous world Sorkin has created, but this is an inept film from its casting decisions on. Tom Hanks is many things, but jetsetting playboy—the real Wilson's

nickname was "Good Time Charlie"—is not one of them: watching him philander his way through strippers, secretaries and Julia Roberts is almost like hearing Fred Penner talk about burying his boner. Roberts is better suited for the role of the wealthy Texas socialite who goads Wilson along, but her actual performance doesn't go much beyond putting on stunning evening wear.

Pretty much the lone bright spot, actually, is Philip Seymour Hoffman as Gust Avrakotos, the relentlessly pragmatic, viscerally cynical CIA agent who helps pull the whole thing off. His intro scene, a spitting, expletive-laced tirade against his boss, is probably the best scene of the film, with little thanks to Sorkin's heavy-handed writing (he's a working class guy among bluebloods, see, which Sorkin all but has Avrakotos scream at the top of his lungs). Further, about the only time Sorkin's trademark back-and-forth works is when Hoffman is the only one capable of overcoming the fact that Nichol has absolutely no grasp of the pacing and timing needed to make this stuff work.

There is probably a pretty good movie somewhere in the story of Charlie Wilson, but *Charlie Wilson's War* certainly isn't it. Inept and thickly hypocritical at its best, it's neither a rollicking good time nor a cogent political piece, just a frustrating,



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PETER TRAVERS, ROLLING STONE

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NATT ZUBER, SEITZ, THE NEW YORK TIMES

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thick-headed film that can't even get its attempts to glamourize war right.

## NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS

DIRECTED BY JON TURTeltaub

WRITTEN BY CORIMAC AND MARIANNE WIBBERLY

STARRING NICOLAS CAGE, JOHN VOIGHT, HELEN MIRREN

★

OMAR MOUALLEM / omar@vuweekly.com

As far as I can remember, I've never seen a good sequel to a bad movie. Chances are, if the original sucked, so will its follow-up. *National Treasure: Book of Secrets* is no exception. It's all the thoughtless camp of the first movie, plus or minus a few brain cells. But what else would you expect from Jerry Bruckheimer?

Nicolas Cage is still Benjamin Franklin Gates, and he is still hunting treasure. It must be hard to discreetly break into museums and political conferences with his notoriety, but despite living in a fantasy world where treasure hunters are popular icons, he manages just fine.

Gates and father Patrick (John Voight) reunite on another nonsensical adventure, but this time the treasure is the family's dignity. For no important reason other than being a total asshole, Mitch Wilkinson (Ed Harris) shockingly reveals that the Gates's ancestor was a co-conspirator with John Wilkes Booth in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, and he can prove so with a missing page from Booth's diary. Of course, we know it's not true because the movie opens with a laughable, hokey sequence that nullifies all suspicions and proves their ancestor an amazing hero, thus deflating whatever mystery there could have, would have, should have been.

So they embark on a hyperbolic journey through caves and tunnels and into the oval office. London, France, Washington—doesn't matter, they're willing to do just about anything to clear their family name, even kidnap the President (Canadian Bruce Greenwood in his second presidential role). Nothing will get in their way, not even the occasional pragmatist who asks, "Is it really worth it?"

Of course, mending their genealogy is all a MacGuffin to find tangible treasures. The film quickly loses and re-loses focus and becomes a convoluted search for Cibola, the City of Gold. *Book of Secrets* uses this and other historical factoids to assume some legitimacy, but because of the Disney stamp, it wastes an awful lot of time on exposition to explain the significance. It even has to define terms like "decode" and "decipher" to ensure the wee ones aren't left behind. These moments are about the only time the movie breathes. The rest of it is spent sprinting from one illogical sequence to another.

Many have compared the *National Treasure* franchise to the Indiana Jones series. What an insult to Jones. Spielberg and Lucas's trilogy actually had a vested interest in your entertainment and loved to stun you with the element of surprise. Bruckheimer's only concern is with your wallet. Why else would it be released just before Christmas? He must be thinking, "Oh, families have already spent hundreds of dollars on gifts for each other, what's another 30 bucks?" But Bruckheimer must be forgetting that Christmas is about the spirit of giving—like giving a flying fuck about your audience, which this movie does not. ▼

## FILM LISTINGS

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre to confirm.

### CINEMA THEATRE JASPER

6094 Connaught Dr. Jasper. 852-4743

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
Daily 7:00, 9:10; Mon, Dec. 31 7:30 only;  
Fri-Sat-Sun 1:30

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
Daily 7:00, 9:10; Mon, Dec. 31 7:30 only; Fri-Sat-Sun 1:30

### CINEMA CITY MOVIES 12

130 Ave 50 St. 472-9779

**CHRISTMAS IN WONDERLAND** (PG)  
Fri-Sat 1:45, 4:40, 7:25, 9:40, 11:50;  
Sun-Thu 1:45, 4:40, 7:25, 9:40

**THIS CHRISTMAS** (PG, not recommended for young children)  
Fri-Sat 1:25, 4:00, 6:45, 9:15, 11:40;  
Sun-Thu 1:25, 4:00, 6:45, 9:15

**MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM** (G)  
Fri-Sat 1:50, 4:45, 7:05, 9:30, 11:35;  
Sun-Thu 1:50, 4:45, 7:05, 9:30

**AMERICAN GANGSTER** (18A)  
Fri-Sat 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00; Sun-Thu 1:00, 4:00, 7:00

**BEE MOVIE** (G)  
Fri-Sat 1:10, 3:40, 5:05, 7:15, 9:10, 11:20; Sun-Thu 1:10, 3:10, 5:05, 7:15, 9:10

**30 DAYS OF NIGHT** (18A, gory scenes)  
Fri-Sat 4:30, 9:50, 12:15; Sun-Thu 4:30, 9:50

**WE OWN THE NIGHT** (14A, brutal violence, sexual content, substance abuse)  
Fri-Thu 1:30, 7:30

**THE HEARTBREAK KID** (18A, sexual content)  
Fri-Sat 1:55, 4:50, 7:35, 10:00, 12:20; Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:50, 7:35, 10:00

**ACROSS THE UNIVERSE** (PG, not recommended for children)  
Fri-Sat 1:15, 4:10, 6:55, 9:35, 12:05; Sun-Thu 1:15, 4:10, 6:55, 9:35

**EASTERN PROMISES** (18A, gory scenes)  
Fri-Sat 2:00, 4:15, 6:40, 9:10, 11:25; Sun-Thu 2:00, 4:15, 6:40, 9:10

**FRED CLAUDE** (PG)  
Fri-Sat 1:40, 4:35, 7:10, 9:35, 12:00; Sun-Thu 1:40, 4:35, 7:10, 9:35

**AUGUST RUSH** (PG)  
Fri-Sat 1:35, 4:20, 7:20, 9:45, 12:10; Sun-Thu 1:35, 4:20, 7:20, 9:45

**THE GAME PLAN** (G)  
Fri-Sat 1:20, 4:05, 6:50, 9:20, 11:45; Sun-Thu 1:20, 4:05, 6:50, 9:20

### CINEPLEX OCEAN NORTH

14231 137th Avenue. 732-2236

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:30, 2:50, 5:20, 8:00, 10:30

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR** (PG)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:50, 4:40, 7:40, 10:15

**SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET** (18A, gory scenes)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:10, 4:20, 7:15, 10:10

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:00, 1:00, 3:20, 4:15, 6:45, 7:30, 9:45, 10:35

**P.S. I LOVE YOU** (PG, coarse language)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 10:00

**ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS** (G)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
No passes Fri-Mon, Thu 12:20, 1:30, 2:40, 4:00, 5:10, 6:40, 7:50, 9:20, 10:20; Tue 1:30, 2:40, 4:00, 5:10, 6:40, 7:50, 9:20, 10:20; Wed 12:20, 1:30, 2:40, 4:00, 5:10, 7:50, 9:45, 10:20

**THE GOLDEN COMPASS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)  
Fri-Thu 12:40, 3:30, 6:30, 9:15

**ENCHANTED** (G)  
Fri-Thu 1:15, 3:50, 7:05, 9:40

**METROPOLITAN OPERA: HANSEL AND GRETEL** (Classification not available)

Tue 11:00 am

**EDMONTON OILERS VS. ST. LOUIS BLUES** (Classification not available)  
Wed 6:30

**THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP** (PG)  
Fri-Thu 12:50, 3:40, 6:50, 9:50

**ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM** (18A, gory scenes)  
Fri-Thu 12:40, 3:00, 5:30, 8:10, 10:40

**JUNO** (14A, coarse language, mature themes)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 9:55

### CINEPLEX OCEAN SOUTH

1525-99 St. 436-8585

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 8:10, 10:30

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR** (PG)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:45, 4:45, 7:45, 10:15

**SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET** (18A, gory scenes)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:50, 4:50, 7:50, 10:40

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:00, 1:00, 3:15, 4:15, 6:45, 7:30, 9:45, 10:30

**P.S. I LOVE YOU** (PG, coarse language)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 9:50

**ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS** (G)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:50, 9:15

**THE KITE RUNNER** (14A, disturbing content)  
Fri-Thu 12:50, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
No passes Fri-Mon 12:30, 1:30, 3:00, 4:00, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:45, 10:45; Tue 12:30, 1:40, 3:00, 4:00, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:45, 10:45; Wed 12:30, 1:30, 3:00, 4:00, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:45, 10:45; Thu 12:30, 1:30, 3:00, 4:00, 5:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:45, 10:45

**ATONEMENT** (STC)  
Fri-Thu 1:20, 4:20, 7:15, 10:15

**THE GOLDEN COMPASS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)  
Fri-Thu 1:40, 4:40, 7:20, 10:10

**ENCHANTED** (G)  
Fri-Thu 12:45, 3:45, 6:45, 9:30

**METROPOLITAN OPERA: HANSEL AND GRETEL** (Classification not available)  
Tue 11:00 am

**EDMONTON OILERS VS. ST. LOUIS BLUES** (Classification not available)  
Wed 6:30

**THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP** (PG)  
Fri-Thu 1:15, 3:50, 6:30, 9:20

**ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM** (18A, gory scenes)  
Fri-Thu 12:40, 3:20, 5:40, 8:15, 10:45

**JUNO** (14A, coarse language, mature themes)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:00

### CINEPLEX WEST MALL 8

8882-170 St. 444-1829

**WELCOME** (Hindi W/E.S.T., STC)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:30, 4:30, 8:30; Mon 12:30, 4:30

**TAARE ZAMEEN PAR** (Hindi W/E.S.T., STC)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:00, 4:00, 8:00; Mon 12:00, 4:00

**CHRISTMAS IN WONDERLAND** (PG)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:10, 2:20, 4:50, 7:10, 9:20; Mon 12:10, 2:20, 4:50, 7:10

**MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM** (G)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:20, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30; Mon 12:20, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15

**BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS YOU'RE DEAD** (18A)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 3:50, 9:45; Mon 3:50

**AMERICAN GANGSTER** (18A)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 1:00, 5:15, 8:45, Mon 1:00, 5:15

**BEE MOVIE** (G)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15; Mon 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00

**GONE BABY GONE** (14A, coarse language, violence)

Fri-Sun 3:45, 9:40; Mon 3:45

**ACROSS THE UNIVERSE** (PG, not recommended for children)  
Fri-Thu 12:50, 6:45

**THE GAME PLAN** (G)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:45, 3:45, 6:40, 9:40; Mon 12:45, 3:45, 6:40

### CITY CENTRE 9

10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

**ATONEMENT** (STC)  
No passes, Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 4:00, 7:15, 10:10

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
No passes, Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 3:30, 6:45, 9:50

**SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET** (18A, gory scenes)  
No passes, Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 3:45, 7:00, 10:00

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR** (PG)  
DTS Digital, No passes Daily 4:10, 6:40, 9:20

**THE GOLDEN COMPASS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)  
DTS Digital, No passes Daily 3:35, 6:30, 9:10

**ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM** (18A, gory scenes)  
DTS Digital, No passes Daily 1:40, 4:40, 7:40, 10:15

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)  
DTS Digital, No passes Daily 4:30, 7:20, 9:40

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
DTS Digital, No passes Daily 4:10, 7:30, 10:15

**CLAREVIEW 10**

4211-139 Ave. 472-7600

**THE GOLDEN COMPASS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)  
Daily 1:30, 4:00, 6:35, 9:15

**ENCHANTED** (G)  
Daily 1:20, 4:25, 7:00, 9:35

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
Daily 2:00, 4:50, 7:15, 9:55

**ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS** (G)  
Daily 12:30, 2:40, 5:00, 7:10, 9:30

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
No passes Daily 12:40, 3:40, 6:45, 9:45

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR** (PG)  
No passes Daily 1:50, 4:20, 7:20, 9:50

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)  
No passes Daily 1:40, 4:30, 7:05, 9:25

**P.S. I LOVE YOU** (PG, coarse language)  
No passes Daily 12:50, 3:50, 6:50, 9:40

**ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM** (18A, gory scenes)  
Daily 2:10, 4:40, 7:25, 10:00

**THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP** (PG)  
Daily 1:00, 4:10, 6:40, 9:20

### GALAXY-SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive. 416-0150

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A, sexual content, nudity, substance abuse)  
No passes Fri-Thu 1:20, 4:40, 7:40, 10:15

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR** (PG)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:20, 4:15, 7:20, 10:05

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10

**P.S. I LOVE YOU** (PG, coarse language)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:45, 3:45, 6:50, 9:45

**ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS** (G)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:00, 2:30, 4:50, 7:25, 9:40

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
No passes Fri-Thu 12:30, 3:30, 7:00, 9:50

**THE GOLDEN COMPASS** (PG, violence, not recommended for young children)  
Fri-Thu 1:00, 4:00, 7:15, 10:00

**ENCHANTED** (G)

Fri-Thu 12:50, 3:50, 7:05, 9:55; Wed 12:50, 3:50, 9:55

**EDMONTON OILERS VS. ST. LOUIS BLUES** (Classification not available)  
Wed 6:30

**ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM** (18A, gory scenes)  
Fri-Thu 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:20

**THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP** (PG)  
Fri-Thu 12:40, 3:40, 6:45, 9:30

### GARNEAU

8712-101 St. 433-0728

**JUNO** (14A, coarse language, mature themes)  
Daily 7:00, 9:00; Fri-Tue 2:00; no 9:00pm show on Mon, Dec. 31

### GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave. St. Albert. 458-9822

**WATERHORSE** (PG)  
No free admission passes accepted Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:45, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30; Mon 12:45, 3:00

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A Sexual Content, Nudity, Substance Abuse) Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 1:25, 3:25, 5:25, 7:25, 9:25; Mon 1:25, 3:25

**ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS** (G)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:55, 2:55, 4:55, 6:55, 8:55; Mon 12:55, 2:55

**I AM LEGEND** (14A Frightening Scenes)  
Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40; Mon 1:40, 3:40

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
No free admission passes accepted Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 1:15, 4:05, 6:45, 9:15; Mon 1:15

### DUGGAN CINEMA-CAMROSE

800140 Ave. Camrose. 700-0000

2144

Matinees Dec. 26, 28-31, Jan. 1, 3, 5, 6. No 9:00 shows on Dec. 31. New Year's Eve.

**DATE OF ISSUE ONLY (THU, DEC 27)**

**NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** (PG)  
Daily 7:05 9:05; Sat-Sun 2:05

**ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS** (G)  
Daily 7:20, 9:10; Sat-Sun 2:20

**WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY** (14A, sexual content, nudity, and substance abuse)  
Daily 7:15 9:15; Sat-Sun 2:15

**ENCHANTED** (G)  
Daily 7:10, 9:20; Sat-Sun 2:10

**THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP** (PG)  
Wed-Fri 7:10 9:20; Sat-Sun 2:10

**I AM LEGEND** (14A, frightening scenes)  
Daily 7:00, 9:00; Sat-Sun 2:00

### METRO CINEMA

9828-101A Ave. Citadel Theatre.

472-7812

Happy Holidays—closed until Jan. 4th, 2006

### PARKLAND CINEMA 7

130 Century Crossing, Spruce Grove. 972-2332, Servino Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Parkland County

There will be no late shows Mon, Dec. 31, New Year's Eve

**THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP** (PG)  
Daily 12:45, 3:05, 7:05, 9:30; no 9:30pm show on Mon, Dec. 31

**CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR** (14A, coarse language)  
Daily 1:05, 3:15, 7:15, 9:20; No 9:20pm show on Mon, Dec. 31

# Auld Lang Swiftys, we'll take a cup o' whiskey yet

GREETING MIDNIGHT AT THE BLACK DOG, EDMONTON'S OUTLAWS LOOK FORWARD TO A NEW YEAR RECORD

MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE / marychrista@vueweekly.com

At least we know not to count on them to be designated drivers this New Year's Eve.

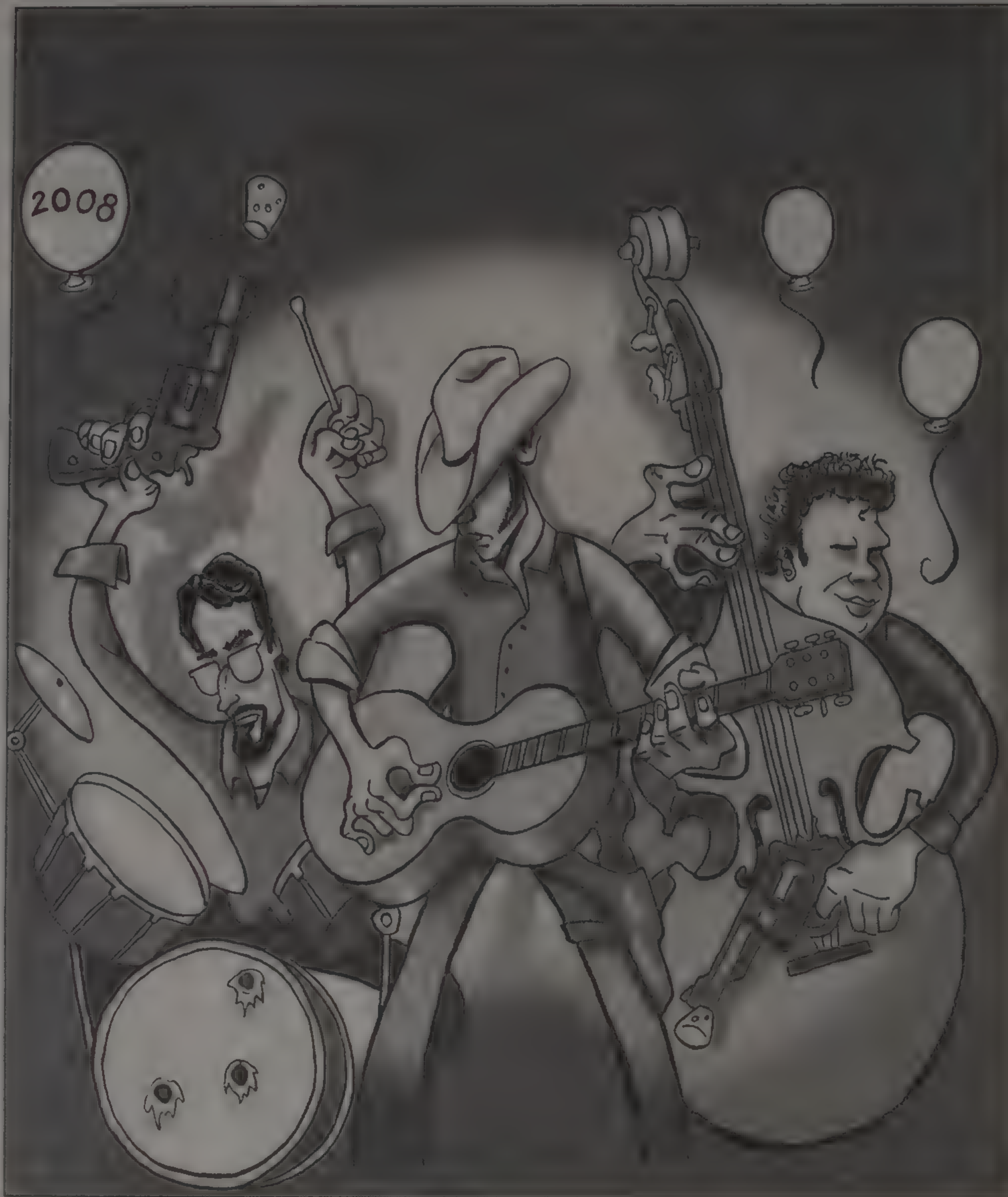
"It's funny, but all the songs have drinking in them," muses Grant Stovel, drummer for the **Swiftys**, as he ponders the track list on the band's forthcoming long-incoming album, due to drop the day after Valentine's Day, 2008. "They all touch on it, at the very least. Every song invokes abject misery somewhere along the line."

That probably won't shock Swiftys fans, used to the Edmonton-based band's windswept prairie-noir take on vintage outlaw country from the trio's whiskey and sweat-soaked live shows to its 2003 self-titled, self-released debut. Beer at a Swiftys gig is at least five per cent tears; whiskey's liberally spiked with anger. Wrath and woe, the twin pillars of Americana, are the emotional currencies of the back roads realm.

"The thing with the Swiftys that causes [our] unbreakable bond," offers the thoughtful Stovel, "is that we personally seem to compliment each other, to a point. You know how lovers take on roles in a way, as the inverse of their partner? In a band, usually, if you're the sensible one, the others become the un-sensible ones and act it out. So George Harrison becomes 'The Quiet Beatle,' whether or not he is really that quiet outside the context of the band. With the Swiftys, the three of us are irreducible, like a triangle, with each point having defined roles and strong characteristics. We're a mini-community together."

**STOVEL'S A LANKY** fella with an amiable, modest manner and an encyclopedic knowledge of blues, jazz and roots that reflects his career as a DJ at CKUA and CJSR. His point of the triangle, he shrugs, is about being "whimsical and candid," while bassist/sometimes songwriter Jody Johnson is "an eternal wonderer."

"Jody has a Jedi-like sense of what's true about people and their relationships—a kind of spirituality that's innate. I admire him so much for that. He can't bear the thought of not being able to figure out what life is for or what we're here for," Stovel elaborates. "Most people either think we can't know or they have some belief system that gives it to them wholesale. Jody wishes he could grasp everything all at once—there's this quest for knowledge and togetherness. He'd rather know than not know, even if it's painful, and see it starkly—that's where some of his ten-



PREVIEW

MON, DEC 31 (10 PM)  
**THE SWIFTYS**  
THE BLACK DOG, \$15

sion is. He'll never stop looking. And if anybody can do it, it's him."

He chuckles and adds, "He's also this great big lug, but has practiced yoga for many years. He walks on his hands better than I walk on my feet."

As for Shawn "Swiftly" Jonasson, the band's six-headed hydra—mastermind, producer, songwriter, singer, guitarist and resident hellraiser—Stovel categorizes him as "a Southern

Gothic Flannery O'Connor. He can see when people are lying—he's sensible in that way, and he's never taken in by con men on the road. He has a tortured sense of morality, to some extent. There's a deep sense of right and wrong in his heart. Not to say he always does what's right, but he finds it hard to live with dishonesty, ever, even when he's not a scintillating example of it. He still feels it's absolutely crucial to live in a way that's truthful to himself and he's drawn to people who make him feel good. He's also strongly drawn to having exploits and mischief, and for

this he's notorious."

**THE SWIFTYS**, as can probably be divined by their name, is Jonasson's brainchild. "We always tend to defer to Shawn's judgment," Stovel explains. "They're chiefly his songs, although Jody has some on the new record. It's his guitar, his singing and his producing. It's virtually all up to him to shoulder the load creatively. Shawn wanted this band—his songs are vehicles for this band, in a way, rather than the other way around. Jody and I balance him out."

Jonasson sought out his bandmates

like a curator, crystallizing the sonic identity of the Swiftys. Johnson, like Jonasson, was a longtime fixture on the local DIY scene, with a history that went as far back as playing in the smalls. (They also seem to share a northern European ancestry that claims descent from a dude called John, or perhaps a less-than-savoury village role.) Both were also in the Grant MacEwan jazz program.

Stovel came into Jonasson's orbit through chance encounter: "I was at the Commercial one late night, and Trevor Rockwell, a brilliant friend and musician, invited whoever happened to be around to his recording space for a session. Shawn was one of those people. At the time, I knew he played alto sax, but I didn't even know he played guitar or anything else."

The session didn't illuminate much more of Jonasson's musical penchants, Stovel recalls. "We recorded a song called 'Robot Love' with Trevor. It was sort of ... disco." A later conversation revealed they had another lucky meeting, years before, when Jonasson helped Stovel jump his car in the middle of the night in -35 degree weather.

When Johnson returned from a one-year stint in Australia, Jonasson poached him for the Swiftys, calling on Stovel to round them out on drums. "I guess he thought he needed a nutty blues player. It was a way-out-there idea in some ways. I'd never really played with them before."

They debuted at a Waylon Jennings night, doing originals instead—in the spirit of the night's posthumous tribute theme, if not the letter. Stovel laughs, "That set the tone for everything that followed."

What followed was the making of the group's debut, a pile of touring and regular participation in almost every worthy tribute event, which netted the trio a solid canon of covers to unleash on unsuspecting audiences during shows.

"We've more or less steered clear of covers, but we have our favourites. Two years ago at the Black Dog we were the house band for a Hank Williams and Townes van Zandt night, working with a bunch of different singers. We had to learn about 40 Townes and Hank songs. Both those guys embody what brought the Swiftys together—way-out-there country with an affinity for blues in it, especially Hank," Stovel notes. "We played 'Cash vs Clash' a couple years ago, some punk bands and us, and we learned a Clash song

CHRISTOPHER YOUNG

# A new year emerges *Out of the Blue*

## BOBBY CAMERON COMES HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

GEN HANDLEY / gen@vuvueweekly.com

Everyone who attends the New Year's Eve concert at LB's Country Kitchen will be welcoming the upcoming year with some honest, heartfelt live music.

"It's definitely going to be a good show," says Bobby Cameron, who is grooving the St Albert stage on Dec 31. "I'm looking forward to playing with my old friends again."

The friends Cameron mentions are keyboard player Gary Bowman, bassist Doug Radford and drummer Sandro Dominelli, who Cameron last played with four years ago when he lived in Edmonton.

Now residing in Toronto, Cameron still sees the Alberta capital as his second home.

"I find that here in Edmonton, if you're really going for it as an artist, it's easy to get the media and people behind you," he says, taking a sip of his coffee. "Edmonton is home to me, no doubt about it."

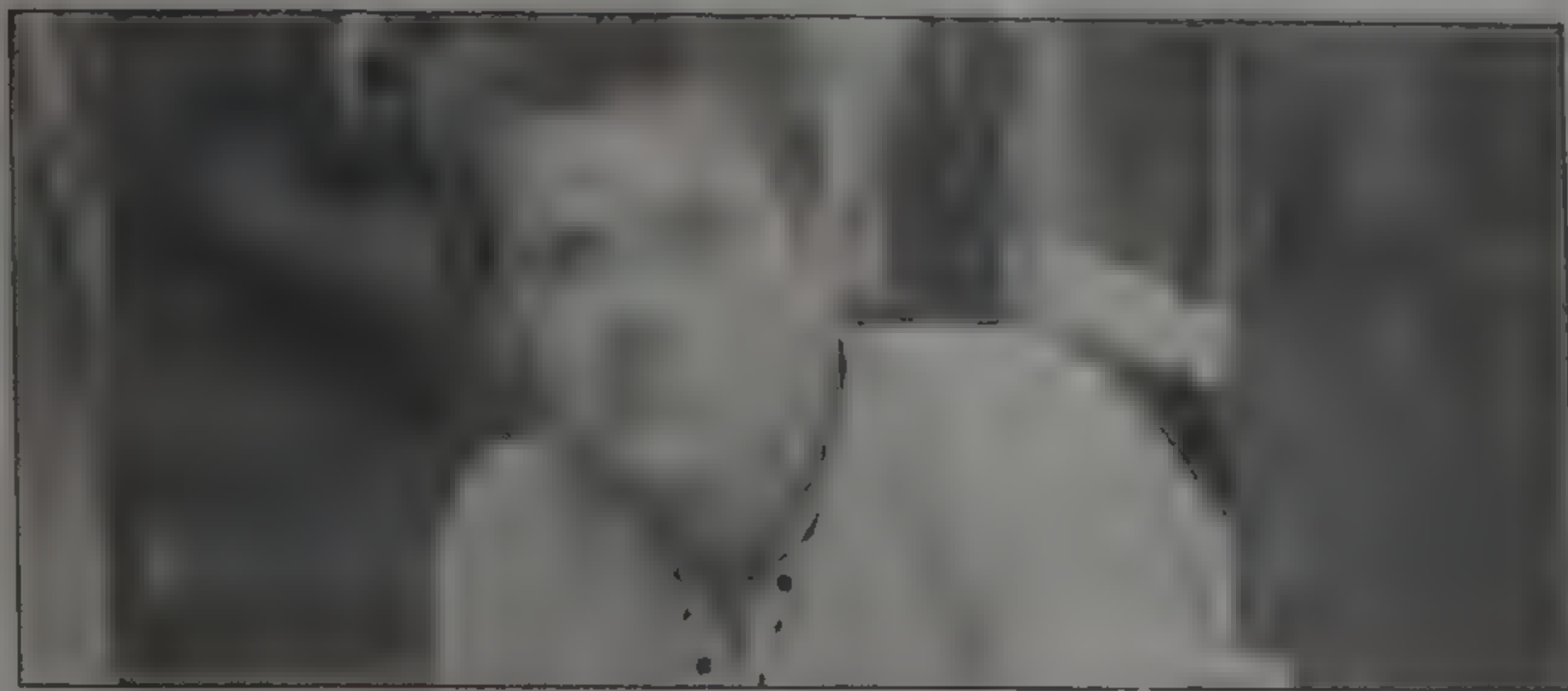
Even after getting into a fender-bender just a week after arriving here, Cameron is still very happy to be back.

"It still feels really good despite that," he says laughing.

**CAMERON HAS ENJOYED** plenty of successes over the last year, so he'll be celebrating 2007 on New Year's Eve along with everyone else at the show. He's earned awards for Best Blues Artist, Best Blues Song for "Sueanna" and Artist of the Year at the *Toronto Exclusive Magazine Awards*, and he also recorded a song with fellow Canadian singer Jully Black for her new album *Just a Moment*.

"Yeah, as a songwriter it was a really good year," he says. "The song with Jully and some other parts made it memorable."

"Jully's the real thing," he contin-



PREVIEW

MON, DEC 31 (6:30 PM DINNER, 9 PM SHOW)  
**BOBBY CAMERON**  
LB'S COUNTRY KITCHEN (111-23 ATKINS DRIVE, ST ALBERT), \$40 WITH DINNER, \$20 WITHOUT

ues, nodding his head. "We got together in my studio, started collaborating and we instantly clicked. She's an amazing fireball of ideas."

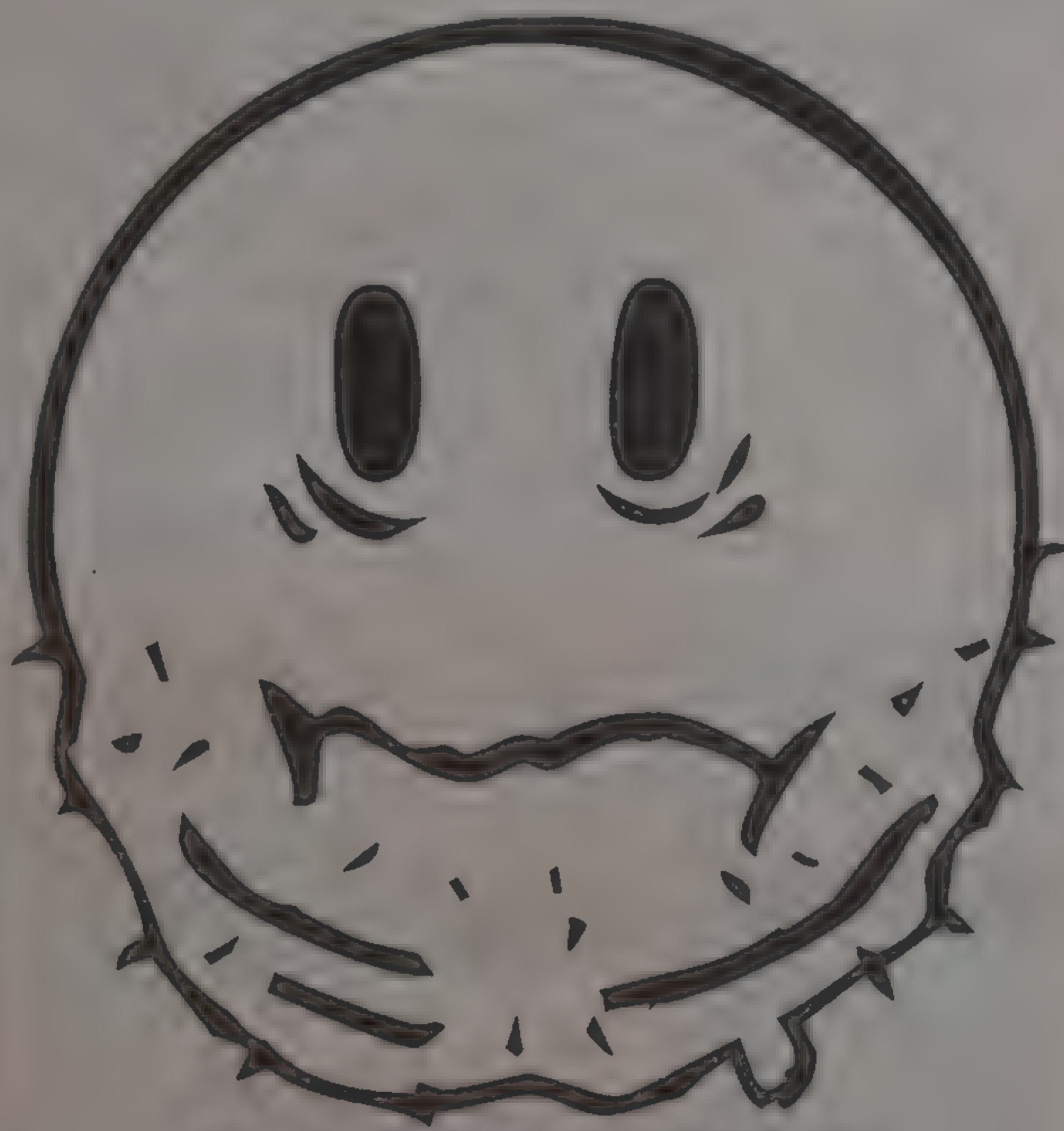
With a solid year behind him, the father of a one-year-old girl named Jaiden also has a lot to look forward to in 2008. He's completing proposals for an independent radio show in Ontario and has his fourth CD coming out in April entitled, *Out of the Blue*, which is the first album he engineered and produced himself. His last album, *Emotional Drift*, was released in 2003 and since then, Cameron has withdrawn

from the industry to focus on singing, producing and creating something that he believes is truly important in the grand scheme of things

"I just want to create something real and something people will hopefully like," he says about the new album. "I simply wanted to make a good record."

And people will get to hear this sincerity when Cameron shares some of his new songs at his year-end concert, including a tune written for his late-friend and blues legend Long John Baldry called "The Boogie Woogie King."

"I thought he was such a sweet man and I loved touring with him," Cameron says, looking down at his coffee cup. "He taught me to play from the heart." ▼



**THE BLACK DOG  
DAY AFTER PARTY!**

NEW YEARS DAY  
TUESDAY JANUARY 1  
2PM TO 2AM  
NO, SERIOUSLY!

15

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**MARKUS  
SCHULZ**  
DJ MAG RANKED #1 IN THE WORLD

MON  
DEC  
31

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NEW YEARS  
Gala 2008**

Harmon B & DJ Kwake  
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91.7  
Bounce

HIP HOP • ROCK • EIGHTIES • ELECTRO

URBAN  
METROPOLIS

CELEBRATION!

SAT  
JAN  
12

**REABOLIOUS**  
PLUS GUESTS

MON  
JAN  
21  
NEW DATE!

**HEDLEY**  
ALL AGES

DOORS AT 7PM  
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT TICKETMASTER

TUE  
FEB  
05

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5 O'CLOCK CHARLIE  
+THE MARK BIRTLES PROJECT

SATURDAY DEC 29:  
HEADBAND  
HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA  
EP RELEASE & 5TH ANNIVERSARY  
WITH REDRAM & TRIPLE EXPOSURE

MONDAY DECEMBER 31  
NEW YEARS EVE  
with  
OUR MERCURY  
AS YAH STEVIE & THE WONDERS

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CRIME WAVE

THE 40 THIEVES • THE JOHNSONS

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FRIDAY JANUARY 4  
TROLE  
RAYOUR COWBOYS & THE BENDERS

SATURDAY JANUARY 5  
HAVEN / SIDE STEP FATE / FEMIX FOUNDATION

LISTINGS FOR YOU

# MUSIC WEEKLY

FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 27  
TO JANUARY 2, 2008  
LISTINGS VIEWED FROM  
MUSIC WEEKLY

## THU LIVE MUSIC

**BACKDRAUGHT PUB** Open stage, 9pm

**CAFÉ LEVA** Every Thursday, Travis Boa plays mellow gold, 7-9:30pm

**CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB** Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude, 6-10pm

**DRUID** Guitar herms

**DUSTER'S PUB** Thursdays open stage, hosted by the Mary Thomas

**FOUR ROOMS** Don Berner, 8pm

**HULBERT'S** Lounge Showcase Jermaine Puga Trio, Puga Trio Rempel, and Craig, 8pm, \$9 (door)

**THE IVORY CLUB** Live Duelling Pianos, no cover, 8pm

**JAMMERS PUB** Thursday open jam, 7-11pm

**J AND R BAR AND GRILL** Open stage with the Poster Boys (pop/rock/blues), 8:30pm-12:30am

**NEW CITY** Ghosts of Modern Man Passenger Action, The Get Down, no minors, 8pm (door); no adv tickets

**NORTH GLENORA HALL** Jam by Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers

**ON THE ROCKS** Love Junk

**WUNDERBAR** Monthly Jam hosted by Tippy Agogo with guests Maigan vander Giessen (Eshod), and Scott Cook, 9:30pm, \$5

**WUNDERBAR** Monthly Jam hosted by Tippy Agogo with guests Maigan vander Giessen (Eshod), and Scott Cook, 9:30pm, \$5

DJs

**BACKROOM VODKA BAR** Thursday Nights: Electro Education dub, trip hop, lounge, electro with DJ Lazer Beam

**BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE** Escapade Entertainment

**BLACKDOG FREEHOUSE** Big Rock Thursdays: DJs spin on two levels

**BUDDY'S** Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy

**ESMERALDA'S** Big and Rich Thursday, top 40, country

**FLYNN MURPHY'S** Bingo with DJ S.W.A.G.

**FLUID LOUNGE** Girls Night out

**HUNNY BUNNY & WHYTE AVE** Requests with DJ Danian

**GAS PUMP** Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

**GINGUR SKY** Thursdays with Urban Substance Sound Crew: InVinceable, Touch It, TNO, Lady Vishus

**HALO** Thursdays Fo Sho' with Allout DJs, DJ Degree, Junior Brown

**KAS BAR** Urban House' with DJ Mark Stevens, 9pm

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Dish Thursdays funky house/techno with DJ Colin Hargreaves, house/breaks with DJ Krazy K, hardstyle/techno with DJ Decha, tech trance/electro with DJ Savage Garret, no minors, no cover

**NEW CITY** Love '80s Thursdays 9pm (door), no cover

**NEW CITY** Bride of Bing: Thursdays, hosted by Dexter Nebula and Anarchy Adam; 10pm, no minors, no cover

**ON THE ROCKS** Thursdays: Dance lessons at 8pm, Salsa DJ to follow

**REPTILIAN GUNNER AND LAP** Thursdays: Funky house, funk, rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee; 9pm-2am, no cover

**PLANET IVORY** Thursdays: breaks, electro house spun with PI residents

**THE ROOST** Gorgeous featuring hostess Dr. Lexxi Tronic, Drag Kings and Queens, burlesque and rotating game shows, bands upstairs monthly

**VELVET UNDERGROUND** Thursdays: WLCM Electro, techno, no wave with DJ Nik 7 of Shout Out Out Out Out, 8pm (door)

## FRI LIVE MUSIC

**AXIS CAFÉ** Friday Live Music Nights

**BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ** The Snoots (acoustic 4-piece folk/jazz)

**CLASSIC EDMONTON**

(pop/rock)

**CLASSIC EDMONTON** Classics (classic rock)

**FOUR ROOMS** Don Berner, 9pm, \$5

**HULBERT'S** Lounge Showcase Sheril Hart Trio: Hart, Woolgar, and Philp; 8pm, \$9 (door)

**THE IVORY CLUB** Live Duelling Pianos, no cover, 9pm

**JEFF AND HYDE** (pop/rock), 9:30pm, no cover

**JET NIGHTCLUB** Ladies Night

**JEFF AND HYDE** (pop/rock), 9:30pm, no cover

**ON THE ROCKS** Love Junk

**STARLITE ROOM** The Igniters, The 8-Movies; no minors, 8pm

**VELVET UNDERGROUND**

0-1-Infinity, with Laceywing and Timmy James, no minors, 9:30pm (show), \$10 (door)

**WUNDERBAR**

CLASSICAL

**MULTIMEDIA HALL** Music Foundation, Opus 28, 7pm, \$20 at TIX on the Square

DJs

**BACKROOM VODKA BAR** Funky Friday: Funky breaks, funky house, funky tunes with Philp and friends

**BAIRN VODKA LOUNGE** Fridays: 917 The Bounce, Nestor Delano, Luke Morrison

**BAR-B-BAR** DJ James, no cover

**BAR WILD** Bar Wild Fridays

**BEAUFORT** Fridays: two levels, Wootop: DJs Ben Jammin' and Bobby Torpedo heat up the patio

**BOOTS** Retro Disco: retro dance

**BUDDY'S** We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm

**FEVER** Ladies night with DJ Jonnie Spinnis and Toni Sanchez

**EMPIRE BALLROOM** Rock, hip hop, house, mash up; no minors

**ESMERALDA'S** DJ Jimmy Friday, 8pm (door)

**FUNKY BUDDHA (WHYTE AVE)** Top tracks, rock, retro with DJ Damian

**GAS PUMP** Top 40/dance with DJ

(pop/rock)

**GINGUR SKY** African Vibes Edmonton's only African night; DJ D-Black (Edmonton), DJ Slicey (Edmonton)

**HALO** Mod Club: indie rock, new wave, Brit pop, and '60s soul with DJ Blue Jay, DJ Travy D, no cover before 10pm, \$5 (after 10pm)

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Hypnotiq Friday: Breakbeat, house, progressive and electro with Groovy Cuvy, DJ Fuuze

**NEW CITY** Fridays: electro, indie, alter-

native, techno with DJs Derwish, Plan B, guests, no minors, 9pm (door), Snow Ball Envy, masquerade

**NEW CITY** Friday Night Freak Out:

rockandroll/punkrock/abitofever-thing/indie with DJs Jebus and Anarchy Adam (from CJSR's Your Weekly AA Meeting), G-Whiz

**OVERVIEW** Thursday: house, funk, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee, 9pm-2am, no cover

**RED STAR** Movin' on Up Fridays

indie, rock, funk, soul, hiphop with DJ Gatto, DJ Mega Wattson

**THE ROOST** Fridays All Request Dance Party with DJ Jazzy with rotating shows every week: \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member), Capital City Burlesque Ho Ho Ho show

**ROUGE LOUNGE** NYC Nights Salsa-merengue-bachata-house-reggaeton-urban-old school with DJ Spice

**SANITARY RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE** Deep House: with Friday resident DJ Luke Morrison

**SPORTSWORLD** Indie and Rock: Top 40 request with a mix of retro and disco, 7pm-12midnight

**STABILITE** Soundclash, Matt Costa, St. Alvia Cartel; no minors, 9pm (door) \$27.50 at Unionevents.com, TicketMaster, Megatunes, Blackbyrd, FS (WFM), Freecloud

**STOLLI'S** Top 40, R&B, house with People's DJ

**STONEHOUSE PUB** Top 40 with DJ Tysin

**TEMPLE** A night of Sagittarius DJs Sagittarius, Space Age, DJ Rystar Greg Saint, Vinny Vo; 9pm, no minors, \$4 (Temple membership)/\$6 (without membership)

**TRIP OF CLASS** McGarrigle (pop rock)

**TRIP OF CLASS** Flashback: house/hard with Johnny

Dangerous, Andy Inertia, guests; 1 7am

**URBAN FRAT** Funktron Fridays

**WUNDERBAR** Fridays with the Pony Girls, DJ Avinder and DJ Toma

**Y AFTERHOURS** Foundation Fridays

## SAT LIVE MUSIC

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** Hair of the Dog, The Trevor Tchr Band, no cover acoustic every Sat afternoon 4-6pm

**BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ** Comin' home with the Blues, Invitational blues jam

**BLUES ON WHYTE** Band of the week, 3-4pm, Open blues jam every Saturday afternoon, 4-8:30pm

**CLASSIC EDMONTON** (pop/rock)

**CLASSIC EDMONTON** Classics (classic rock)

**THE IVORY CLUB**

**HULBERT'S** Lounge Showcase Marleigh and Mueller, 8pm, \$9 (door)

**THE IVORY CLUB** Live duelling pianos, no cover, 9pm

**JAMMERS PUB** Saturday open jam, 3-7:30pm; country/rock band 9pm-2am

**JEKYLL AND HYDE** Headwind (pop/rock), 9:30pm; no cover

**JET NIGHTCLUB** Ladies Night: The final a Little Bitter Show

**MEAD HALL**

Vivisect, Becoming the Martyr, Fall of the Sacred, Kill Kelsey, Etherial, all ages event, licensed area, 8pm (door), \$10

**O'BYRNE'S** Wednesday Nights Chnst Wynters (Captain Tractor), guests; 9:30pm, no cover

**URBAN FRAT** Funktron Fridays

**REX**

**RENDEZVOUS** Post Apocalyptic new year metal night

**STARLITE ROOM** Lucky Star; '80s retro party; no minors, 8pm, \$5, dress the part and get in free

**TAPHOUSE** Saturday Moosehead Jam, hosted by Carmen Cook and Gator Shlemey; 3-7pm every Sat

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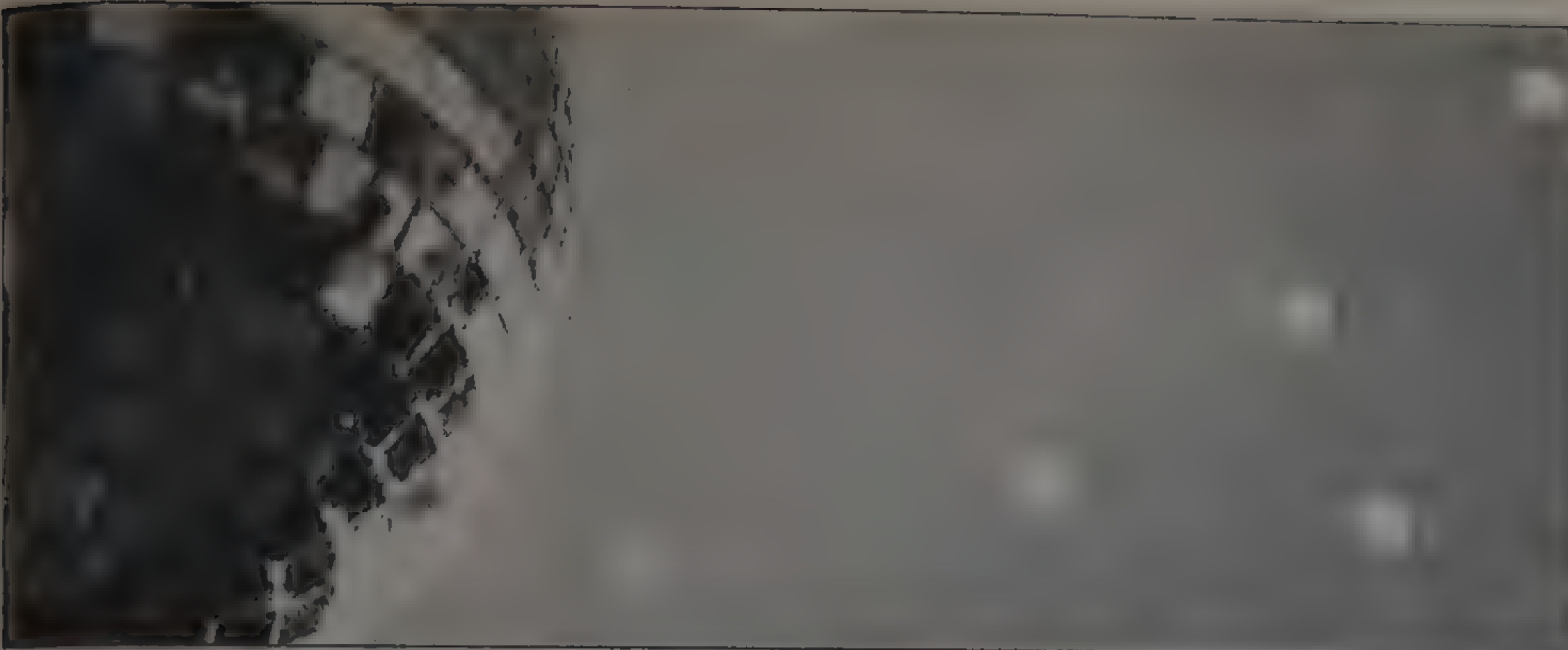
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PREVUE / MON, DEC 31 (9 PM) / THE BOUNCE'S NYE PARTY / EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE, \$30 - 100

With two rooms, three DJs, three levels, hot women, VIP areas, bottle service and hours and hours of painstaking design going into the sound and light systems, you'd best believe that the dress code for this party is "Dress to Impress." That means leave your Crocs at home, and you can only rock out with your cock out if you measure up!

**TEMPLE** Oh Snap Pre New Years Party: All Out DJs, DJ Degree, Cobra Commander; no minors; 9pm

**VELVET UNDERGROUND** Tieman, Yvonne Thompson, Frank Walls; no minors, 8pm

**WILD WEST** 10 PM

## DJS

**BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL** Saturdays: Top 40 with DJ Soundwave

**ELITE BALLROOM** Two levels: alt rock/electro/trash, Main Floor: The Menace Sessions with Miss Mannered

**BUDDY'S** Undie night for men only, free pool and tourney, DJ Anowchaser

**DANTE'S** Love Jones Xclusive Saturdays, R&B, hip hop, reggae, old school

**DELUXE BURGER BAR** Rare '60s and '70s progressive rock, disco, and electronic indie with Joel Reboh

**EMPIRE BALLROOM** hip hop, house, mash up

**FEVER** Saturday night Fever, with DJ Jonnie Spinn and Toni Sanchez

**FLUID LOUNGE** Saturdays Gone Gold Mash-Up, with Harman B and DJ Kwake

**PUNK! BUDHA WHITE** Top tracks, rock, retro with DJ Damian

**GINGUR SKY** Soulout Saturdays

**HALO** For Those Who Know: house every Sat with Blair Junior McFarlane, along with Sal Dimaio and Jason Thompson

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Sizzle Saturday: DJ Groovy Cuvy and guests

**NEW CITY DOWNTOWN LOUNGE** Saturdays real alternative, classics, punk with DJ Nazz Nomad; no cover

**NEW CITY SUBURBS** Saturday Sucks: electro, industrial, alt and indie, electro, rock with DJs Nik Rofeelya and Blue Jay (Mod Club); \$5

**PLANET IMPROV JASPER AVENUE** Suggestive Saturdays: breaks electro house with PI residents

**RED STAR** Saturdays indie rock, hip hop, and electro with DJ Hot Philly and guests

**THE ROOST** Saturdays—Always like New Years Eve: with DJ Dan (Retro) downstairs and DJ Jazzy (New Music) upstairs; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); last Sat night party at the Roost

**SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO** Sportsworld Inline and Roller Skating Disco: Top 40 request with a mix of retro and disco; 1-5pm and 7pm-12 midnight

**STARLITE ROOM** Oh Snap and Gomp Present—Oh Snap, I just got STOMPED! Degree and Funktrader, Nik 7 and DJ Fuzze, The Protege and Agent Orange, Kevin Partridge and Cobra Commander, Soulls and All Out DJs, 9pm; \$7 (door), membership required

**STOLL'S ON WHYTE** Top 40, R&B, house with People's DJ

**TEMPLE** Oh Snap, Residents Degree, All Out DJs and guests; no minors, \$3 (Temple membership)/\$5 (without membership)

**TWILIGHT AFTERHOURS** hard NRG/trance/funky with Jeff

Hillis, OTOR, Big Daddy, STX, Tweek, 1am-8am

**VELVET UNDERGROUND** All The Way: Dave Stone, Rob Tryptomene, Neil K

**WILD WEST** 10 PM

**Y AFTERHOURS** Release Saturdays

# SUN LIVE MUSIC

**BLUE CHAIR CAFE** Comin' home with the Blues Invitational

**CROWN AND ANCHOR PUB** Sunday jam; 7pm

**DUSTER'S PUB** Sunday open stage hosted by the Mary Thomas Band

**EDDIE SHORTS** Every Sunday open stage with Rob Taylor; 4-8pm

**HULBERT'S** Sunday Night Mic hosted by Rhea March; 7pm

**JAMMERS PUB** Sunday open blues jam; 4-8pm

**NEWCASTLE PUB** Live Sunday jam hosted by Willy and Dave; 2-30pm

**NEW CITY WEDNESDAY NIGHT** Heroes

**O'BYRNE'S** Open stage with Joe Bird, 9-30pm; no cover

**ON THE ROCKS** Soullah Fyah Sundays with DJ Dudeman

**OSCAR'S PUB** Open stage Sundays hosted by Chns Wynters of Captain Tractor; 8-11pm

**OVERDRIVE** Anything Goes acoustic jam every Sunday afternoon with the Shufflehound; 1-30-5pm

**ROSEBOWL** Sunday open stage featuring the Digs/Mike McDonald alternate weeks, 9-12

## DJS

**BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL** Industry Night: with Atomic Improv, Jameoki and DJ Tim

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** Got To Give It Up Sunday Afternoons: Main Floor: Funk, soul, Motown, disco with DJ Red Dawn

**BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB** Latest and greatest in House, Progressive and Trip-Hop; Rudy Electro; 10pm-2-30am; guest DJs inquire at kelly@michetti.com

**EMPIRE BALLROOM** hip hop, house, mash up

**EVERETT BEACH** Industry Night: Requests with DJ Bo

**URBAN FRAT** Urban Ladies Night Sundays

**URBAN LOUNGE** Sunday Night Live: hosted by DA Choclit Elvz, DJ Sweetz 9pm; the best of Urban's live entertainment 10pm

**WUNDERBAR** Sundays DJ Gallathea and XS, guests, no cover ship required

# MON

## LIVE MUSIC

**ALICE HOTEL-CAMPBELL** Slowburn (blues/rock); 9-30pm-2am, 1000-1000

**ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** Jimmy Whiffen; \$35 (with dinner)/\$10 (without dinner); champagne at midnight

**THE BANK ULTRA** Bank Goes Hollywood: Upstairs New Hollywood: favourite club hits with DJ Duncan, Downstairs: Classic Hollywood, Upper Level: relaxed down tempo jazz DJ mix; minimum age 21+; 8pm-2am

**BAR WILD** Kokanee Glacier Party DJ Shocker; \$15 (adv)/\$20 (door)

**BEERHUNTER'S PUB** Dangerous Guise; \$25 (dinner/dance)/\$10 (dance only, after 9pm)

**BLACKDOG FREEHOUSE** The Swiftys; \$15 at Blackdog and Blackbyrd

**BLUE CHAIR CAFE** Rault Brothers Band; Stuart MacDougall and guests; \$85 (dinner and music)

**CASINO EDMONTON** Souled Out (classic rock); 9pm; \$65 (incl. buffet)

**CASINO TILLYWYNN** Abba (tribute show); 9pm; \$80 (incl. buffet)

**CELESTINE PUB AND RESTAURANT** A Lucky Affair Melt Down; 7pm (dinner/dance; reserved seating); 9pm (dance); \$49.99 (3-course dinner/dance)/\$10 (dance only)

**CENTURY CASINO** with Kenny Shields and Streetheart; \$69.95 at TicketMaster or Century Casino 643-4000

**CLUB DU SOLEIL** Edmonton's Premiere Singles Club: The Northern Kings; 6-30pm (door), 7-30pm (buffet dinner), 9pm (dance); 12-30am (light luncheon); \$50 (Club Du Soleil regular/lifetime members)/\$60 (non-members); 993-1175 for tickets

**COAST TERRACE PUB** Alumni Orchestra (big band dance band); 6-30pm (door), 7-15pm (dinner), 9-30pm (dance); \$95 (incl. buffet dinner, party favours, midnight bubbly, live music)

**COOK COUNTY SALOON** Blame it on that Red Dress: Gord Bamford; 8pm (door); \$25

**CROWN PUB** Colour in Conflict (Indie alt-rock); 6pm (door), 10pm (music); \$5 (adv) at Crown Pub or call 913-3242

**DANTE'S WORLD PUB AND SKY LOUNGE** Last Night of Sin—The closing of Dante's World Pub and Sky Lounge. Bisto: jazz band, 8pm, \$95 (dinner/dance); Pub: hip hop, R&B with DJ Jason Chambers (Toronto), 7pm, \$75 (dinner), \$30 (adv. dance) at Soular and Alexis, Method and Que, Laws Liquor, and Ebony and Ivory; \$60 (VIP) at Urban Elite Promoters 378-0111, info@urbanelite.ca, and Dante's Bisto

**DELTA INN SOUTH** Jazzy New Year: The Tuxedo Junkies; 5-30pm (door), 7-30pm (dinner), dance until 1-30am; \$119 at TIX on the Square

**DELTA INN SOUTH** Latin New Years: live Latin music and Latin DJs; 5-30pm (dinner), 7-30pm (dinner), 9pm-3am (dance); \$80 (dinner/dance)/\$30 (dance only) at TIX on the Square

**THE DANCING PUB** LARRY STAGE SALOON

Amico and Brian Gregg Trio with Moses Gregg on bass (folk, blues, country, original roots); 8pm, \$5

**EDDIE SHORTS** Give 'em Hell Boys (hillbilly troubadours); \$20 (incl. champagne, party favours and munchies)

**EDMONTON DOWNTOWN-ALAN STAGE** (Churchill Sq) The Wheat Pool, Captain Tractor, The McDades; 9pm-midnight

**EDMONTON DOWNTOWN-CITY HALL** Eclectic (folk, jazz, world light classical), Strathcona String Quartet, Ann Vriend, Marco Claviera McDonald Broadband; 7pm

**EDMONTON DOWNTOWN-STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY** Sheri Somerville, Vissia Sisters; 9pm

**EDMONTON DOWNTOWN-EDMONTON CITY CENTRE** CBC Centre Stage. Andrea House, The Uncas, James Murdoch; 9pm

**FESTIVAL PLACE** The Top Ten Show and Revue led by Dave Babcock ('60s, '70s, '80s and '90s music); 7pm; \$75 at Festival Place box office

**FOUR ROOMS** Mobius; 9pm

**GINGUR SKY** With Toronto's Jump up Kings and DJ Invoiceable and Babygirl

**HOOUGANZ PUB** Great Offenders; 7pm; \$20

**HULBERT'S** Murder at the Juice Joint: interactive murder mystery night; a '20s swing, jazz, and Chicago blues band; 6-30pm, \$99

**IVORY CLUB** 5 hour live show; 8pm

**JET NITE AND HYPER PUB** Headwind (after dinner); \$25 (incl. dinner)/\$5 (cover)

**JET NIGHTCLUB** Rattpoison, Bonifide, Crush; \$20 at TicketMaster, and Jet Nightclub

**LB'S PUB** Open Stage with Shaved Posse hosted by Ken, Fred, Gordie and Matt; 9-12-30

**LIZARD LOUNGE** Lost in the Shuffle

**MEAD HALL** The Order of Chaos, Necronaut, Shadowblade, Skopsis, all ages event, licensed area; 7pm (door), 7-30pm (music); \$10 (adv)/\$15 (door)

**NEW CITY** New Year's Eve; \$10 (adv. general, good until 10-15pm)/\$30 (adv. silver, good until 11-30pm)/\$20 (general)

**ON THE ROCKS** OTR New Year's Eve. Retrofizz (11-piece dance band), 6-30pm (dinner seating), 9pm (dance); \$25 (dance)/\$45 (dinner, a 3-course meal with seatings)

**OVERTIME** OH SNAP! The Legendary New Year's Eve Bash with DJ Shnav; 9pm (door); \$25 (reserved seating), includes guaranteed seating, complimentary coat check, preferred access to midnight BBQ, bottle of champagne, party favours, and the big bag of swag plus midnight BBQ

**OVERTIME SOUTH** Casino Royale New Year's Bash: with DJ Emmy, 9pm (door); \$25 (reserved seating), includes guaranteed seating, complimentary coat check, preferred access to midnight BBQ, bottle of

champagne, party favours, and the big bag of swag/\$15 (general party ticket), includes bottle of champagne, party favours, and the big bag of swag, plus midnight BBQ

**PACIFIC LOUIE** Goes 211 (rock); 1 \$60 (5-30pm or 6pm 3-course dinner); 2 \$100 (8pm or 8-30pm 4-course dinner, dance and champagne); 3 \$10 30pm; \$40 (dance and champagne); reservations: Jodh at 780.720.8338 or e-mail jodhs@packratlouie.com

**PALACE CASINO MONTANA LOUNGE** New Year's Eve with the Rum Brothers

**PAWNSHOP SALOON** Real Country New Year's Eve: With Craig Moritz live in concert, includes party hats, champagne, and noise makers; 8pm, \$12 (available only at the Palomino Saloon), www.palomino.com

**PAWN SHOP** Thee Johnsons (Johnsons-OKE), Thea Fat Dave Crime Wave, Thee Firebrands

**PLEASANTVIEW COMMUNITY HALL** Acoustic instrumental old time fiddle jam hosted by the Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers Society; 7pm

**RAMADA INN** The Emeralds; 5pm (door), 7-30pm (dinner), dance until 2am, \$89 (dinner/dance)

**RENDEZVOUS** Stone Ins, Jezabelle, Sweat Pants

**RIVER CREE RESORT** Edmonton International New Year's Eve Gala music by DJ Tomsr; \$130 (per person) at Designers Furs and Gifts, 8526-109 St. 433-3877

**THE ROOST** An Affair to Remember—a Black and White Party the last New Year's Eve at the Roost; 7pm; \$10 (member)/\$14 (non-member), no advance tickets

**ROXY THEATRE** Vaudevilian New Years Eve: Bill Bourne, Tippy Agogo and guests; 8pm (door), 9pm (show), \$30 (adv. at TIX on the Square)/\$35 (door)

**SANTA MARIA ROBERTI CENTRE** Night Classics (DJ and dance band), \$65 (adult)/\$35 (child)

**SEAWAY COMMUNITY CENTRE** The 15th Bear Children's Fund New Year's Bash 2008. Thornley, State of Shock, Tin Foil Phoenix; 8pm (door), \$42.40 at TicketMaster, no tickets available at the door

**STARLITE ROOM** Out Out, Digitalism, Connected DJs, Nestor Delano, Luke Morrison, Dusty Grooves, Mikey Wong and Hector Castro; 7pm; no minors; \$30 (first 150, only at Blackbyrd and TicketMaster); \$60 (next 300 at Fosh, Yess hair, Blackbyrd TicketMaster)/\$90 (final 300, only from Connected)

**SUTTON PLACE HOTEL** Charlie Austin Band (dinner/dance); reservations required, 780-441-3032

**THE TAPHOUSE** Current Swell (folky, rock reggae); 8pm (door); \$25 (incl. champagne)

**TEDDY'S** Amon McGrath, the City Streets, and the Secret Fires; 8pm (door), 9-30pm (band), \$10 at Listen Black Byrd, Megatunes, or through the bands

**URBAN LOUNGE** Tupelo Honey, Octane; 8pm (door), \$25 (incl. champagne, party favours)

**VINNY'S LOUNGE** Allan-Lee and the Blues Busters (blues/roots)

**WILD WEST** Brant Lee; 7pm (door), \$27.50

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## Roland's top 20 songs of 2007, part one

MUSIC

### BACKLASH BLUES

ROLAND HENDERSON  
roland.henderson@city.com

20) Calvin Harris "Acceptable in the 80s"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=p1S3JCknQJ4)

This is a very modern success story: boy hears LCD Soundsystem, thinks "I could totally do that," makes MySpace page, gets discovered by Sony, makes the UK top 10 with two different singles and by year-end has his album in English airport CD shops and becomes commercial bumper music for two or three BBC programs. Pretty good year.

19) Dizzee Rascal "Pussyole (Old-skool)"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=86Ok0B9EvZg)

An unlikely first taste from Maths + English, "Pussyole" is a song with an incendiary chorus vilifying snitches and the same break made famous by "It Takes Two" by Rob Base and DJ E-Z Rock. In tough times like these, one shouldn't be surprised that even dance music has taken such a paranoid turn.

18) DJ Khaled ft Akon, TI, Rick Ross, Fat Joe, Birdman and Lil' Wayne "We Takin' Over"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=D9g2szHsoz0)

Featuring bouncy horror movie synths from Timbaland protege Danjahands and every rapper in the world, this is the best posse cut since Wu-Tang's "Triumph." Drug and thug raps aside, the song is fear incarnate, each rapper taking a crack at,

well, crack or someone else's head. Baby intros Lil' Wayne perfectly ("Now my son on the throne"), who proceeds to close out the song with the gravitas of Tsar Nicholas II waiting for the Bolsheviks.

17) Justice "DVNO (Radio Edit)"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=vTzDm5PEQh8)

Oversaturated before it was even officially released, Justice's album † brought dance music directly back into the mainstream. The Broadway exaggeration in Mehdi Pinson's vocals goes perfectly with the clipped disco stabs and dry, breathing edits present on this pervasive dancefloor assault. Of the songs run into the ground by DJs this year, this is one I can still stand by.

16) !!! "Must Be The Moon"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=wLOXLHy7kes)

Though it came out early in the year, !!!'s album *Myth Takes* has endured, with help from the group's incredible show this year at the Starlite Room and this song in particular. Rapped out a la Tom Tom Club, Nic Offer blurts out magic in dude talk over rolling bass and the requisite disco hi-hats. Playing it at a party makes you feel like you're in a Molson Canadian commercial. In a good way.

15) Kanye West ft Mos Def "Drunk And Hot Girls"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=ZlvNUIvUKZU)

Kanye has gone out of his way to impress me by recontextualizing a Can song into a synthed-out 5/4 rap waltz about my favourite thing. Merry Christmas!

14) Hadouken! "That Boy That Girl"

(youtube.com/watch?v=CgGtLYyBQ0)

A beautiful thing called "grindie" happened this year. It's a cross-pollination between grime rap and beats and live rock instrumentation. Hadouken! is a hybrid band of this sort with a youthful exuberance and Lydonian disrespect for boundaries. This song is my favourite kind of social analysis, a hipster anthem that purely criticizes hipsters ("That girl is an indie Cindy").

13) DJ Mehdi "Signature (Thomas Bangalter More Kick Edit)"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=vN8fkKMA8vg)

Dark, abrupt chops and floor-ready kicks accentuate one of the best dance tracks of the year. Leave it to one half of Daft Punk to see endless possibilities in a one-minute album interlude.

12) Skepta "In A Corner"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=Z2Mc7ELusvc)

This song encapsulates hope for the sublow scene in the UK, featuring a monster chorus and semi-positive raps against conflict at raves. "Them can't see we face, balaclava" becomes a fearsome jungle chant, bringing the fear and palpable sense of danger back to grime.

11) Yeasayer "Sunrise"  
(youtube.com/watch?v=4wvKD2L0zA4)

This is future music, made out of what our nuclear holocaust survivor descendants will cobble from the heart of darkness, including battered recordings of David Byrne's voice and Native American drum circles. Sounds like the Band building a space station.

### CLASSICAL

**BILLY THIRTY AND CARR**  
CHURCH Deja New Ensemble de la New Year's Eve concert, 7:30pm; \$20 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior/low income) at TIX on the Square

### DJs

**BILLY THIRTY AND CARR**  
Electro Latest and greatest in House, Progressive and Trip-Hop, 12am-2:30am; interested guest DJs inquire at kelly@michetti.com, karaoke with Tizzy, amateur strip contest; 9pm-12am

**EDMONTON EVENTS CENTRE**  
New Year's Eve Gala: R&B, hip hop, reggae, old school with Haman B and DJ Kwake; hip hop, rock, eighties, electro with Mike Tomas

**Y AFTERNOONS**  
Roofie, Enn Eden, Luke Morrison, Anthony Donohue, Tianna J. Nestor Delano, Donovan; Underground DPM, DJ Bree, DJ Darkin vs. Little Satan, Bryan Doyle; Upper Heaven Big Daddy, Mix Matt R, Travis M. Mector; Station 2, STX and guests, 10pm-10am; tickets at Foosh, Tree

House Records, Underground, Yess Hair, Y Afterhours (only 400 adv. tickets)

**TUE LIVE MUSIC**

**DRUID JASPER AFTERNOON**  
stage with Chris Wynters

**LEGENDS PUB** Tuesday Open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

**O'BYRNE'S** Celtic Jam with Shannon Johnson and friends, 9:30pm

**TAPHOUSE** Tuesday Moosehead Jam, hosted by Mark Ammar, Dale Collins, and Noel Mackenzie 8:30pm-1am

**WILD WEST CAFE**

### DJs

**BUDDY'S** Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser; 9pm

**ESMERALDA'S** Top 40, country, R&B with DJ Foreplay, DJ Jimmy

**FUNKY BUDDHA** (Whyte Ave) Latin and Salsa music, dance lessons 8-10pm

**GINGUR SKY** Bashment Tuesdays Reggae music with Bomb Squad, Q.B., Chrome Nine; no cover

**RED STAR** Tuesdays. Experimental Indie Rock, Hip Hop, Electro with DJ Hot Philly

**SAPPORO RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE** Tapas Tuesday popular house beats with DJ Kevin Wong

**SPORTSWORLD INLINE AND AMT ROLLER SKATING CASCADIA** Top 40 request with a mix of retro and disco; 7pm-12 midnight

**WINDMILL BAR** Punk with Phillip and Bogner

**WED LIVE MUSIC**

**EDDIE SHORTS** Wednesday blues jam with Brian Patch (guitar)

**HOOIGANZ PUB** Open stage Wednesdays hosted by Rock 'n' Roll Kenny

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Open mic

**O'BYRNE'S** Chris Wynters and guests, 9:30pm, no cover

**STARS AND VIEW COMMUNITY HALL** Acoustic Bluegrass jam presented by the Northern Bluegrass Circle Music Society every Wednesday evening

**STEEPS TEA LOUNGE** Open mic (acoustic) every Wed, (last Wed each month spoken word)

**WILD WEST CAFE**

### DJs

**BACKROOM YODHA BAR** Wednesdays Soulful Deep House with Nic-E and Smoov

**BANK ULTRA LOUNGE** Wednesday Nights: with DJ Harley

**BLACKING FREEHOUSE** Gulch Wednesdays roots music with DJ Buster Friendly; no cover; live music once a month

**BUDDY'S** Hump day with DJ

Seoxy Sean

**FEVER NIGHTCLUB** Industry Wednesdays, with DJ Jonnie Spinnis and Toni Sanchez

**FLUID LOUNGE** Wednesdays Rock This

**THE FOX** Wind-up Wednesdays R&B, hip-hop, reggae, old skool, reggaeton with InVinceable, Touch It, weekly guest DJs

**LEGENDS PUB** Hip hop/R&B with DJ Spincycle

**NEW CITY LEWIS CLOTHES** Out With Your Box Out Wednesday Night; no minors, no cover

**NICO DIAMOND'S** Punk and '80s metal every Wednesday

**RED STAR** Guest DJs every Wednesday

**STANDARD** Wednesday Gone Wild Feat: with DJ Nestor Delano

**STOLL'S** Wild Cherry House/garage with Tripswitch, Rezident Funk, fusion with Steve Velocity

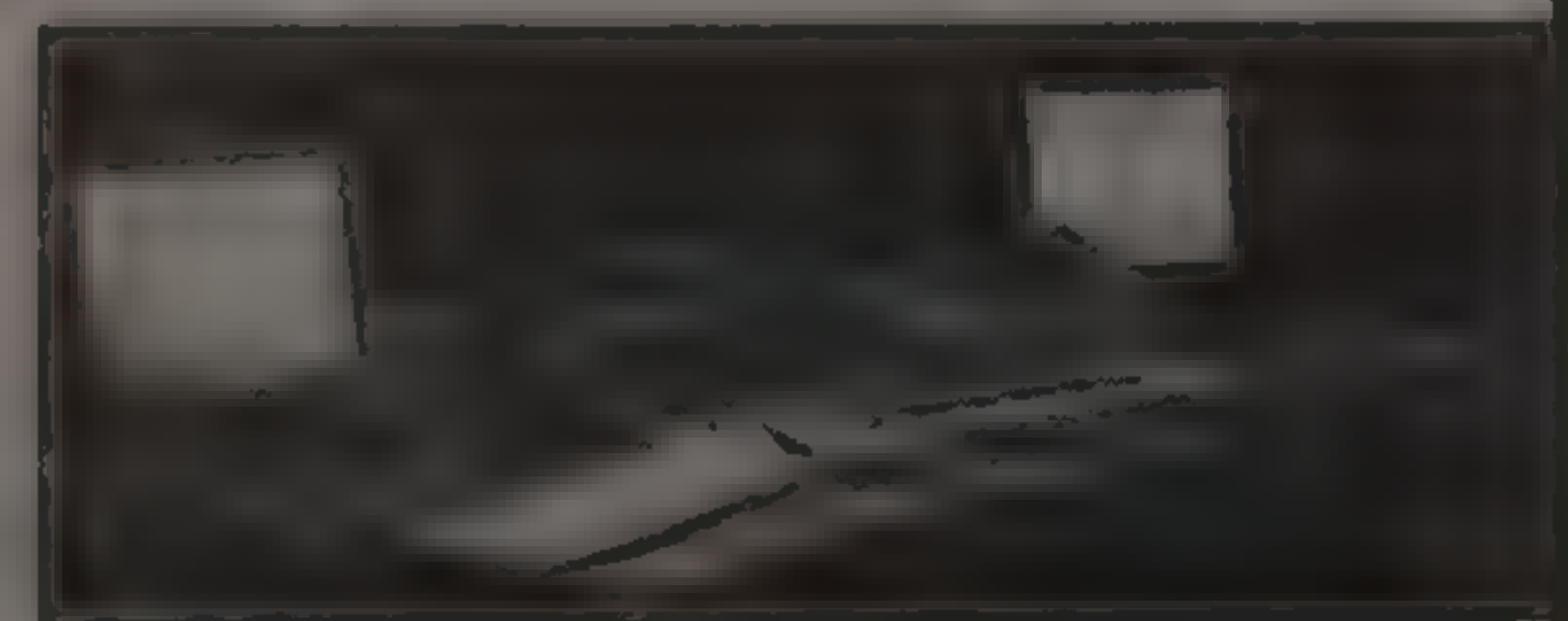
**WUNDERBAR** Wednesdays with new DJ, no cover

**Y AFTERNOONS** Y After

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# Digitalism adds two nations to its army

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuwweekly.com

Deep, down in an old Second World War bunker, the dudes behind Germany's **Digitalism** find dark grooves that are impossible to ignore, especially if you often get the urge to shake it.

"We're pretty isolated when we're inside. That makes it quite creative, because we don't get distracted—there's no windows or anything. It's like eternal darkness—quite amazing," says Jens Moelle, one half of the duo. "I think the bunker just gave it a bit more of a melancholic touch, well. There is a darker atmosphere to some songs."

"When we started producing in the bunker a couple of years ago, it encouraged us to, like, adopt this kind of punk edge because it seems like something raw—garage or something even rougher than a garage."

Reminiscent of LCD Soundsystem, Soft Punk and even a little bit of Chemical Brothers, Digitalism takes its cue from the sentiment behind Queen's "We Will Rock You." Finding themselves dissatisfied with most electronic offerings at the turn of the century, Moelle and his mixing mate Nail Tüfekci joined forces a few years ago to find a harder-edged sound that resonated. When they looked for something with harder guitars, for instance, the choices were limited.

"We were both working in the

PREVIEW

MON, DEC 31 (7 PM)

**DIGITALISM**

WITH SHOUT OUT OUT OUT, CONNECTED DJS  
STARLITE ROOM, \$90

record industry, selling records and I was working for this distributor and we got a bit bored of all the records—it was some kind of over-saturation," Moelle explains. "So we started doing our own stuff and just started to play it in our DJ sets and we didn't really think about how it should sound like. We just used everything that was lying around the studio because we always had to share it with other bands. So it was live drums or guitar, and we just put everything on the computer. We did this with the intention of doing something that excites us both."

**TO THAT END**, one of the duo's first remixes was the White Stripes's "Seven Nation Army." Releasing four singles since then, including the popular "Zdarlight," Digitalism eventually produced *Idealism*, an album that hit stores last summer and that has carved out a niche hybrid of electro, punk and indie sensibilities. While Digitalism's electro rock is hardly re-inventing the wheel, the pair sure make sure that wheel is pimped out and sexy, what some may even call a perfect conveyance for New Year's Eve.



For this bash, however, Moelle and Tüfekci will be splitting resources, with Moelle in Edmonton and Tüfekci in Rome, each playing their own DJ sets. While Moelle isn't too sure how his solo sound will come off yet ("I

think it could be a bit harder. I'm not sure, because I never plan things, so I'm quite curious about this myself."), he is pretty happy to be coming to Canada over Italy.

"It's quite a trip coming over to

Edmonton," he explains. "I think it's a bit more interesting than just playing where we always play—like London or somewhere around in Europe."

Besides, Edmonton in winter might be just like a WWII bunker. ▼

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## Five O'Clock Charlie makes one last fly-by

ALYSSA NOEL / alyssa@vuweekly.com

**F**ive O'Clock Charlie's break up might have been catalyzed by guitarist Stephen Tchir's move to Montreal, but according to the band's singer, it was a cat that delivered the final blow.

"The secret reason the band broke up is that Trevor (Belley, bass player) and I got a cat and Dave (Meagher, drummer) got upset and vowed to quit the band," Craig Schram says mischievously.

He later admits that the story is a blatant lie he concocted to explain one of the band's press shots, but the story also serves as evidence to back up the claim that he's pretty indifferent about the group's amicable parting.

"When Steve was like, 'I'm moving away,' I was like, 'Yeah great,'" he explains. He had been talking about it for a long time. I don't know if we decided to break up. We just let it happen. It's not a big deal."

He almost got away without having to publicly acknowledge their split. Before Tchir left, the band tossed around the idea of one last show, but Schram quickly objected.

"I didn't feel it was really necessary," he says. "Local bands have last shows all the time. I don't know how many people listen to us or like us. People show up and watch us, but I don't know how important we are—or were. Sometimes I feel like declaring we're having a last show is a little selfish."

Selfish or not, that blowout is going to take place Dec 28, nearly nine

**PREVIEW** FRI, DEC. 28  
**FIVE O'CLOCK CHARLIE**  
 THE PAWN SHOP, \$8

months after they last performed on stage together. With Tchir en route back to Edmonton for the holidays, Schram changed his mind and the band decided to reunite one last time. The spur of the moment decision has left Schram, Belley and Meagher frantically scrambling to practice their long forgotten songs before Tchir returns home.

"We've been rehearsing the last week and a half and the same jokes we were telling (in the past) keep popping up," Schram says.

Although he avoids any sentimental gushing, he admits playing as a band again has reminded him how well they work together. But he's careful to point out it's not necessarily unique.

"There's something about playing in a band," he admits. "I would liken it to being in a relationship with someone. You become really close with them. They almost become like brothers to you. And you're driving to Calgary in a van together and you make silly jokes and they carry along through the entire life of your band. There's nothing like that relationship. I appreciate being exposed to that with these guys."

**FIVE O'CLOCK CHARLIE** began playing shows around the city in 2002 when the members were at the tail end of

high school, but the group didn't release its first full-length album until 2005. Shortly after, the band took its folk-pop act on the road to Montreal.

Schram says that experience playing to empty bars in strange cities was "fucking daunting" at the time, but turned out to be one of his fondest memories with the group.

"It's funny because at the time you're like, 'Shit, we're alone in this city,'" he recalls. "Every band has gone through that ... It's almost like a rite of passage."

After the tour, the musicians began to work towards putting out another LP, but as students, they got wrapped up in their educational pursuits and never finished it. When Tchir announced he would be leaving to finish his music degree at Concordia University, they had a few songs they felt were worthy of release, so they decided to put together an EP.

The band pressed 100 copies of *Watercolours* and, as the name suggests, hand-painted all of the cases. There are about 20 copies left and they'll be on sale at the farewell show at "discount prices," Schram advertises with a laugh.

Last minute rehearsals have indicated that the performance will be just as good as the sale prices, he adds. "I think we're going to be tight," he says. "The last couple of rehearsals have been good."

And although he nixed the idea of a farewell show only a few months ago, he now admits, "It'd be nice to have a lot of people there for one last hurrah." ▽

for that. It's become one of our favourites to play live."

Stovel reckons the Clash tune'll make it into the band's rowdy New Year's Eve set, along with other beloved covers and some of the group's older songs. A good chunk of the night, though, will be devoted to material that will appear on the record Jonasson's frantically finishing (as producer) in a Winnipeg studio in between stints on the oil rigs and time with his kid.

"We've been bandying around absurd ideas for album titles, but *Volume II* is a prevalent thought," Stovel says. "Shawn's a perfectionist in the studio and also, I think, a procrastinator. He needs to have studio time lined up to give him impetus to finish a song. That's the way he enjoys it. He has a disproportionate amount of studio experience, recording and as a producer and session player. Shawn's made lots of records in his time."

**THE DRUMMER LIMNS** the differences between the two Swiftys songwriters. "Shawn has an interesting melodic sense about him—there's a nebulous quality to a lot of his melodies. They have almost entirely noncommittal major/minor chord progressions, never one or the other but between the two. That describes him a bit too, I think, his inner state. He doesn't do this on purpose, but it's just the way it comes out. The

songs he writes are usually a series of vignettes with no chorus. A lot of his songs are exaggerated tales, or sagas, even, without one goal crystallized in the chorus. Jody builds on the chorus over and over again, comes back to it with more depth each time."

Stovel also reveals the album features a Shuyler Jansen tune, and one by Darrek Anderson & the Guaranteed. "These are songs we're excited about. Shuyler tried to do 'Bottle of Wine' for years, with Old Reliable and for his new solo record, but it never sounded right. He's said for years it wouldn't work unless the Swiftys did it. And the Darrek Anderson [one] is a song we sing to each other when we're driving on tour. It's about 26 oz of gin ..."

Stovel trails off. "Yeah, more drinking! I guess that's not too surprising with everything going on in Shawn's life now—he split with the mother of his child and he's already known to have the odd demon or two clinging to him."

The drummer acknowledges that sorrow touched his family this hard year as well, with the sudden death of his beloved father last winter. "And Jody had a lot of good things happen, but it was still a transition," Stovel says of Johnson's summer wedding and move to affordable Saskatchewan.

"So making the album was very intense. We would come together in the studio and throw as much together as possible, and then scatter to our respective corners and lives," Stovel relates. "There's a lot of bewilderment on the record. All the songs are very, very bleak. Extra bleak! There's not a lot of sunshine. But it feels really good, paradoxically. It feels right to make this record right now. There's a curative quality to music on the dark side. The ultimate purpose of playing music and listening to music is to be lifted up, and we hope that that's what this record does for folks—it takes on that cathartic role."

We can all drink to that. ▽



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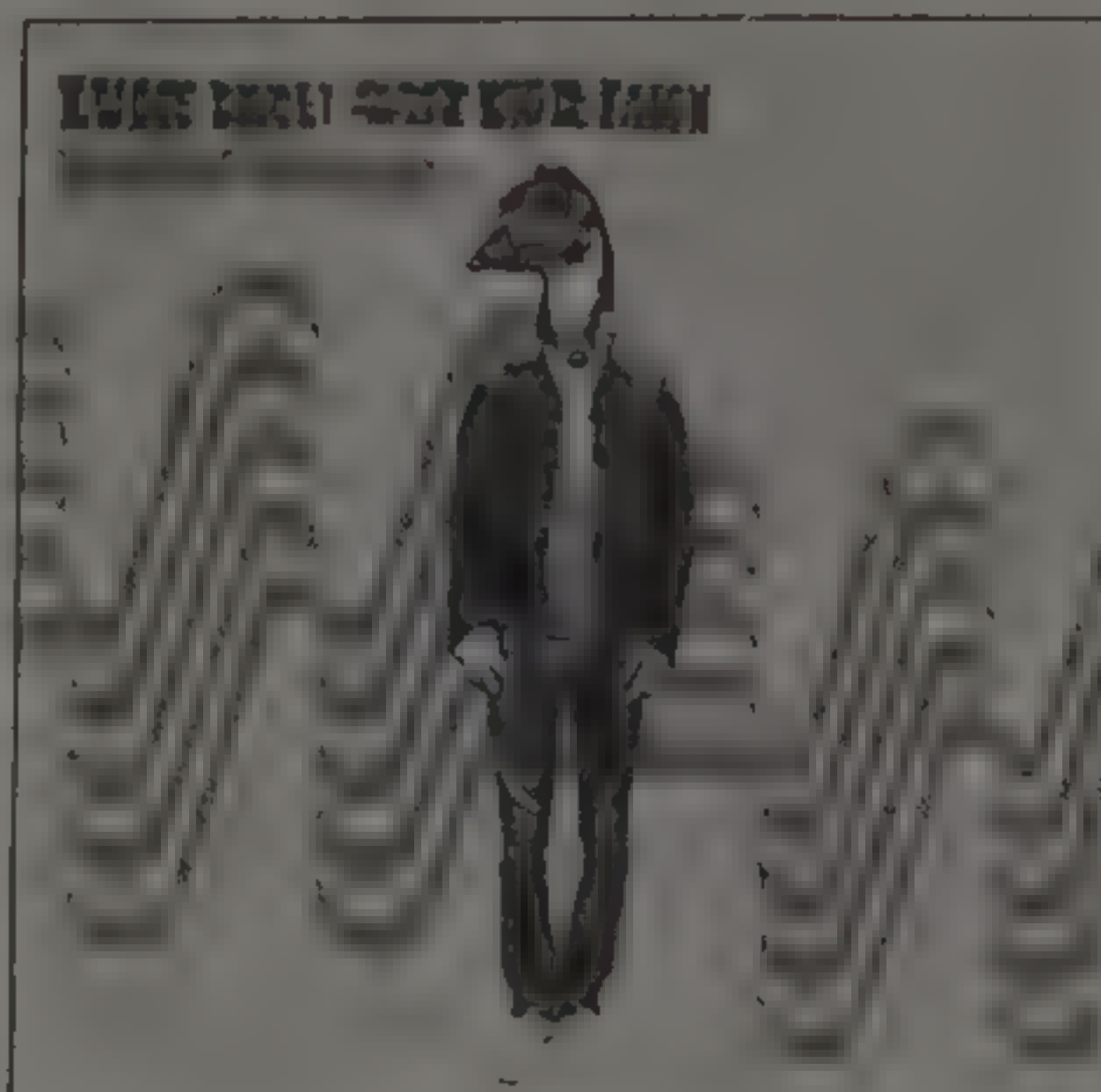
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EDEN MUNRO / edea@vueweekly.com

The album opens with a gently-picked intro to "Long Haul Driver"; then, the music picks up slowly, the gears notching up as the song chugs onward and Doucet sings of a life spent

So maybe there is a level of musical complexity here that is too often missing from music. Still, it's more a result of seeing the whole picture of each



On an emotional level, Doucet casts a perceptive eye upon such subjects as life in a new town ("First Day in the New Hometown") and the anticipation that grows as the end of the work week approaches ("It's Only Tuesday," where Doucet sings the lines "I'm living for the weekend / Just like all good working people do," yet thankfully manages to avoid the spectre of Loverboy); these are songs that capture the intricacies of

Like the Rolling Stones' *Exile on Main St.*, or the Band's self-titled second album, *Blood's Too Rich* sounds alive, revealing new twists upon every listen. It's the kind of album that makes you long for a quiet hour so that you can enter its world and unfold its songs like chapters of an old book.

MARY J BLIGE  
GROWING PAINS  
UNIVERSAL

**JONATHAN BUSCH** / [jonathan@vviewweekly.com](mailto:jonathan@vviewweekly.com)

SPYGIRL  
PIECES OF EVIDENCE  
SPYGIRL MUSIC

KRISTINA DE GUZMAN / kristina@vpeweekly.com

Tranquil for the most part, moments of surprise remain in Spygirl's second full-length album—such as in the manic mash of piano and trumpet found in the bridge of "Where Did the Stars Come From?" and in the distant wails in "Beautiful." Koralee Tonack's voice effortlessly becomes its own wonderful instrument, at times becoming the centerpiece of tracks like "Come Out to Play" and "Today," songs that also contain the record's loveliest melodies. For those with little expertise in differentiating between various piano and organ types, it might be a little difficult to figure out who's doing what in a band of six while listening to a song. Nonetheless, the urge to give everyone equal applause for complimenting each other so well will abide.

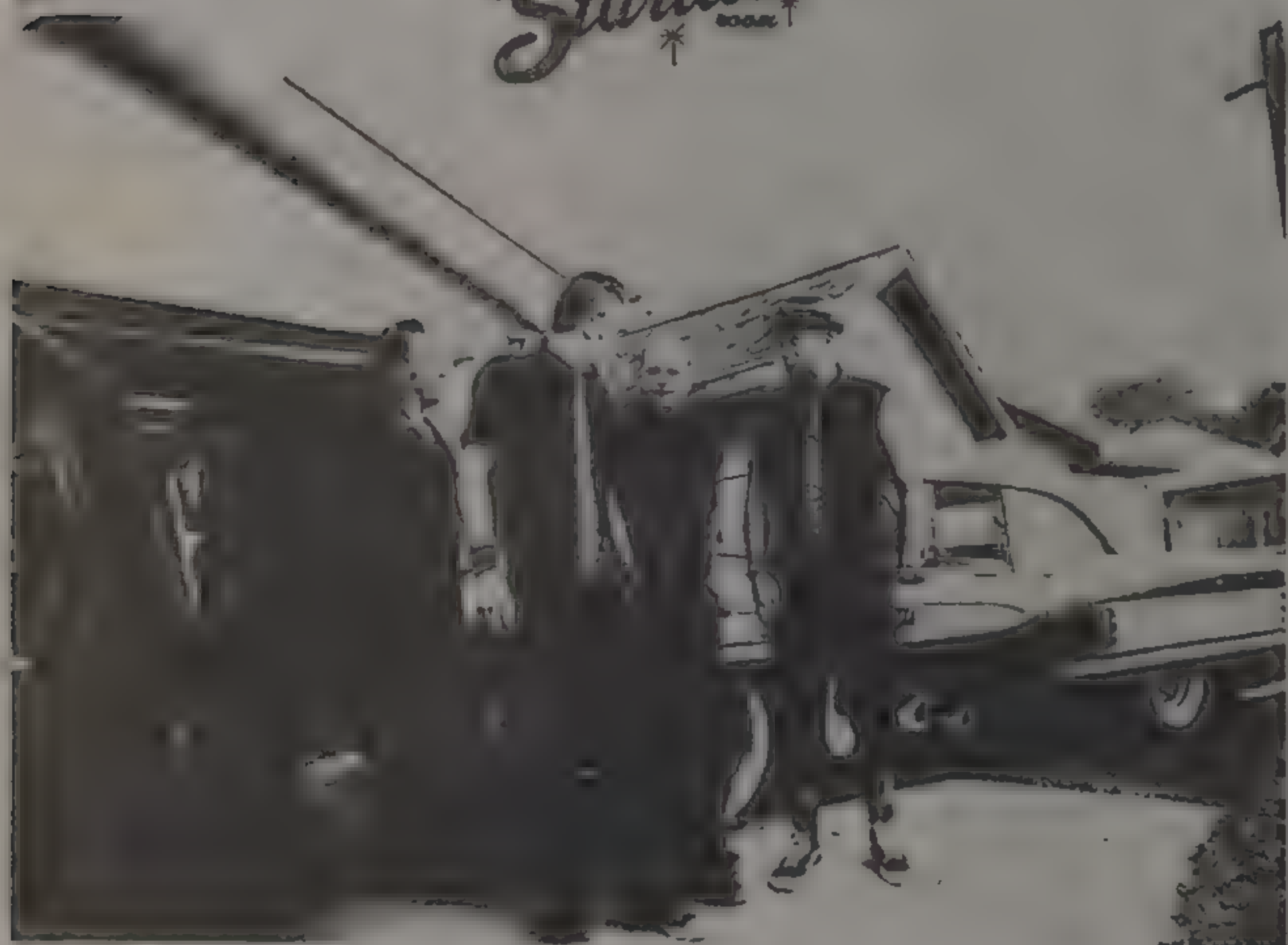
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04. winding the night away the shins  
05. *the shins*  
06. hissing fauna... of montreal  
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08. excellent italian greyhound shellac  
09. andorra canbou  
10. mirrored battles

# IN ITS WAKE

**KRISTINA DE GUZMAN** / kristina@vuweekly.com  
Listening to St Catharine's In Its Wake is like being taken back to a time when girls in their teens or younger were determined to win the arguments they had with their fathers about whether or not boy bands like N\*Sync and the Backstreet Boys were, in fact, talented musicians. In short, such girls were delusional. At times, In Its Wake appears to be getting somewhere. The intro to "Pieces" for instance has potential, but that quickly goes down the drain as soon as Jamie Nudds starts to sing. Even with the mediocre, uninspired lyrics, a better singer could probably turn a track like "Pieces" into gold. As it is, this is more like pyrite.

# PITTSBURGH SLIM TASTEMAKER

**JONATHAN BUSCH** / jonathan@vuweekly.com  
If you're cool, and I know you wanna be, you'll add "Pittsburgh Slim is the shit, pass it on!" in parentheses to your MySpace name. That's the trend his page is successfully communicating to visitors right now, and unlike a radio contest, you can't win any money doing it. But it's catching on, maybe because his new album *Tastemaker* enthusiastically promotes the white male ego as though it were making a comeback. The first single, "Girls Kiss Girls" is about ladies swapping tongues when they get drunk and how awesome it is. It's a bouncy mix of post-Slim Shady keyboard glitches.

# RUFUS WAINWRIGHT

**DAVID BERRY** / david@vuweekly.com  
Wainwright has the kind of melancholy, effortlessly emotional voice that can make pretty much anything work. Live albums are the perfect medium for someone with his dramatic flair, and the fact he's probably been singing these songs into the bathroom mirror since he was six certainly doesn't hurt, either. How much you like it will depend on where you fall on the Rufus Wainwright/Judy Garland fan matrix,

# VARIOUS ARTISTS

**DAVID BERRY** / david@vuweekly.com  
Tomlab has done a fairly good job of compiling a catalogue of esoteric pop in a suitably esoteric way. Most of the bands here have some connection to the label—who also put out the book of poetry these songs are drawn from—though it also manages to pull in a few bigger names for the uninitiated (that's if acts like Grizzly Bear, Final Fantasy, Islands or Casiotone for the Painfully Alone didn't already pique your curiosity). A solid introduction for anyone.

# Would you like some music with that?

## MUSIC ENTER SANDOR

**STEVEN SANDOR**  
steven@vuweekly.com  
I used to get really excited about going record shopping. For me, going through racks of CDs and albums, looking for rarities and other record-geek items, was a perfectly passable way to spend a Saturday.

But, more and more, the recording industry is trying to get consumers to think about buying albums in all sorts of places that, well, aren't record shops. By now, anyone who is addicted to Starbucks coffee has noticed that the coffee chain has CDs for sale at the tills. This holiday season, the Recording Industry Association of America is promoting the fact that KT Tunstall's iTunes digital album card for the *Drastic Fantastic* album is available at Starbucks, as are iTunes cards for the *Into the Wild* soundtrack. In Canada, our own Second Cup chain is looking to compete with Starbucks when it comes to music. The chain has been actively searching for singer-songwriters to play in various locations across Canada—and it has even pitched for artists in the Songwriters Association of Canada website.

As if coffee shops aren't enough, labels are now looking to supermarkets. Instead of flipping through gossip rags at the checkout aisles, US Safeway customers can look for digital iTunes cards for Norah Jones's *Not Too Late* album.

And Target, another discount big-box chain, has an exclusive deal to sell Taylor Swift's Christmas album.

I appreciate that the recording industry is trying to find new ways—and places—to market music to the masses, but when CDs and digital download cards end up at checkout aisles, has the industry itself not admitted that music is nothing better than an impulse buy? Is that what the industry envisions as the future of the business? That, instead of record-store visits on lazy Saturdays, we will be enticed by music in the same way we are lured by gum, candy bars and magazines as we wait for the cashier to ring through our groceries? Will we buy albums, only to later forget about them until we find the cards or the CDs when we are transferring cartons of milk to our refrigerators?

In this world, what happens to the people who anticipate the release dates of albums from their favourite bands? Or, the person that brings an entire stack of CDs or records to the cash register, looking forward to a week of listening to new music? I know you people are out there.

It's just that buying an album as you're deciding whether or not you want a grande- or venti-sized latte takes all the, well, enjoyment out of record shopping.

And, in the end, I think it cheapens the product. ▽

*Steven Sandor is a former editor-in-chief of Vue Weekly, now an editor and author living in Toronto.*

## HAIKU! QUICK SPINS

**RIVERS CUOMO**  
**ALONE THE HOME RECORDINGS**  
(Geffen)  
Rich, famous weirdo's  
Basement tapes from when he was  
Just a plain weirdo

**DPETH**  
**THE ROUNDHOUSE TAPES**  
(PEACEVILLE)  
The only "roundhouse"  
That interests me is a kick  
To this fucker's throat

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
**WWE RAW GREATEST HITS: THE MUSIC**  
(COLUMBIA)  
Ron can fire me . .  
I just ain't paid enough to  
Listen to this crap

**THE AUTUMN OFFERING**  
**FEAR WILL CAST NO SHADOW**  
(VICTORY)  
Grade eight poetry  
Over truly bitchin' riffs;  
This is true metal

**GODSMACK**  
**GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES... TEN YEARS OF GODSMACK**  
(UNIVERSAL REPUBLIC)  
If there's just one thing  
These assholes can tell themselves,  
At least they ain't Creed

**V/A**  
**DISCO NOT DISCO: POST PUNK, ELECTRO & LEFTFIELD DISCO CLASSICS 1974-1986**  
(STRUT)  
Disco-punk orphans  
Unloved, unwanted.. Now get  
A little limelight

**GHOSTFACE KILLAH**  
**THE BIG DOE REHAB**  
(DEF JAM)  
This shit is tighter  
Than a colon full of beef.  
But.. Uh.. Not that gross

**CHAKA KHAN**  
**FUNK THIS**  
(BURGUNDY)  
The perfect record  
For a bubble bath and a  
Bottle full of reds

10030-102 STREET \* INFO: 428-STAR

## UPCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY DECEMBER 20

**THE IGNITERS**  
THE B-MOVIES & GUESTS

SATURDAY DECEMBER 29

**LUCKY STAR!**  
80'S RETRO PARTY

MONDAY DECEMBER 31

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**SHOUT OUT OUT OUT OUT**  
**DIGITALISM**

WITH **CONNECTED DJS: NESTOR DELANO, LUKE MORRISON, DUSTY GROOVES, MIKEY WONG & HECTOR CASTRO**

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FRIDAY JANUARY 10

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PSYCHO REALM / DANNY DIABLO / BOONDOX / RIVIERA REGIME

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 23

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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WITH LACEWING & TIMMY JAMES

SATURDAY DECEMBER 29

**TIERNAN {JAPAN}**  
WITH YVONNE THOMPSON & FRANK WALLS

SATURDAY JANUARY 12

**SPREAD THE NET FUNDRAISER**  
WITH CASSIDY, BRIAN TOOGOOD & GUESTS

SATURDAY JANUARY 19

**CHRISTIAN HANSEN & THE AUTISTICS**

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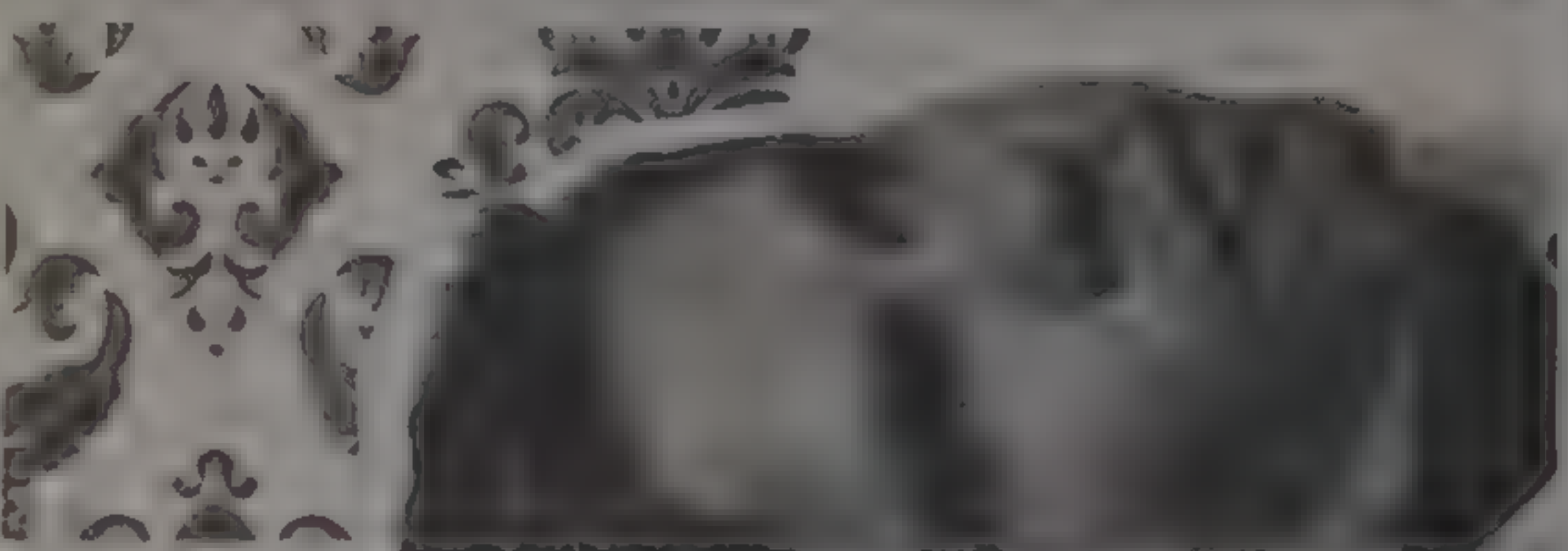
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WITH KILL THE LIGHTS & 40 THIEVES

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MON MARCH 3 **CRYSTAL CASTLES**  
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COMPLETE RECORDING ARTISTS FROM SAN FRANCISCO... GUESTS

THUR MARCH 25 **JASON COLLETT**  
AND HIS BAND: (ARTE & CRAFTS) PLUS GUESTS

FRI MARCH 28 **GRIMSKUNK**  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST BROKEN NOSE

## New releases on the horizon for local acts

### BUT NOT BEFORE NYE AND A MORNING-AFTER HANGOVER CURE

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuweekly.com

More so than Halloween, more so than St Patrick's Day, more so than at your nutty office Christmas party and certainly more so than Easter, New Year's Eve is the night to get fucked up and crazy. Drinking is nearly mandatory, kissing is a tradition, debauchery is certainly encouraged and wild times will be had by all. Now that I think about it, starting a brand new year on your absolute worst behaviour seems kind of like a bad idea.

But no matter. In fact, maybe you should just get it all out of your system now, so you can be a better person in 2008. And what better way to get it out of your system than with a veritable smorgasbord of indie music? For those who think everything's great when they're downtown, the Secret Fires, City Streets and Eamon McGrath will be shaking their money makers at Teddy's, while across the river at the Pawn Shop 40 Thieves, the Johnsons, Fat Dave Crime Wave and Jah Stevie & the Wonders will provide a mix of punk and soul to propel you into a brand new year.

Last year Teddy's held a similar show, and as Travis Sargent of the Secret Fires explains, there were more than a few things that made it special.

"I think it was the first show that



ever even happened at Teddy's," he says. "I don't wanna ring my own bell here but ... you're welcome Edmonton. Most of the people spent the night in the secret men's room lounge—there's this little corridor upstairs when you walk into the men's washroom and most people spent all night arm wrestling on the floor in there. Comfortably you can fit maybe 20 people. It was like a cock-fight, you need a guy to take bets, cigarette girls, someone to sell Pilsner to the City Streets."

ON THE SOUTH SIDE of the city, the show will surely reach similar levels of craziness, but the 40 Thieves' Caleb Neumeier was a little preoccupied with telling me all about another band on the bill—Jah Stevie & the Wonders—to really get into how crazy it's going to be.

"This show features the best band to ever come out of Edmonton who you will probably never see again," he beamed. Now before you get all confused like I did, I'll let you in on a little secret—Jah Stevie is not some new band. It's an old band whose name rhymes with, oh I dunno, Our Bercury. But keep it under your flat cap says Neumeier: "It is half a secret, but it's a really pleasant secret."

And 40 Thieves has more pleasant times ahead as the band is planning on recording and releasing a full-length album in 2008, to follow up its EP *Omens*.

"We're recording for three weeks in the beginning of April—Nik [Kozub] is doing it for us," Neumeier explains. "We had to bring our EP to Nik to remix it because we weren't happy with it. It was a total crunch job and he did the best job ever. A lot of the things we're not happy with on the EP if we had recorded with Nik would be hot."

Curiously enough, the Secret Fires will also be dropping an album in 2008 after a series of disappointments and strange incidents surrounding its

PREVIEW

MON. DEC 31 (10 PM)  
**THE SECRET FIRES**  
WITH CITY STREETS, EAMON MCGRATH & THE WILKINSONS  
TEDDY'S, \$10

MON. DEC 31 (10 PM)  
**40 THIEVES**  
WITH JAH STEVIE & THE WONDERS, THE JOHNSONS, THE FAT DAVE CRIME WAVE  
PAWN SHOP, \$10

recording.

"We recorded an album and waited around for six months for the guy to mix it, and he never did, so we had our friend sneak in and steal the tapes for us so we could get another guy to mix it," laughs Sargent. "We just got the masters back and they sound really good. It's going to be called *I Only Want What I Can't See*. It's about how you can never get what you want."

In addition to the full-length album, the Secret Fires and the City Streets will be releasing a split 7" of Replacements covers, entitled *Movies are for Retards*. (Calm down, people—it's a Replacements lyric.)

AND FINALLY, SINCE everyone knows that band boys are hangover pros, I thought it a pertinent time to get a little hangover advice so that the people who attend their shows don't regret it as much in the morning.

"Oil of oregano, man, it works so well," Neumeier assures me. "It kills everything in your body except what you need to survive. I just take a few drops of that, drink lots of water, hang out and watch movies."

And while hanging out and watching movies is good, Sargent's magical elixir differs slightly.

"The times in life when I'm proudest of myself are when I have the forethought after a night of drinking to go to 7-11 and get some Powerade and wake up to it on my bedstand. I feel good about myself then." ▽

## TOP 10 RINGTONES

- 1) Apologize  
Timbaland
- 2) Crank That  
Soulja Boy Tell 'Em
- 3) Kiss Kiss  
Chris Brown feat. T-Pain
- 4) Low  
Flo Rida
- 5) Thunderstruck  
AC/DC
- 6) All I Want for Christmas Is You  
Mariah Carey
- 7) Don't Stop the Music  
Rihanna
- 8) No One  
Alicia Keys
- 9) Bubbly  
Colbie Caillat
- 10) Let It Snow,  
Let It Snow, Let It Snow  
Michael Buble

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THIS WEEK'S FEATURE ARTIST: **THE SECRET FIRES**

# Having trouble in winter? Could be time to kisspeptin and make up

## ADVICE ALT.SEX.COLUMN

**DEAR ANDREA:**  
I have a friend a few years younger than me. We were recently at a bar having drinks talking about his girlfriend and my wife. After a time, he confided to me that in the last few weeks he has been having trouble with getting it up and was very concerned that he would have to take ED meds for the rest of his life or that he was losing his edge. We are both in our early 40s and in good shape/health.

My answer to him was that he should not panic. Seems to me that as the weather changed to colder and the days became shorter and we set the clocks back, our bodies, which are much more attuned to nature than we are generally aware, are preparing for winter and are

slowing down. I've noticed that my sleep patterns changed at the visible onset of winter, I've been less interested in sex, and less interested in physical activity. I also remember that in the springtime, when the days get longer and the sun shines, I get real horny all the time; or at least I did last spring.

Are there any studies to support my thesis? Is any of this quantifiable?

LOVE, REGULAR READER

**READ REG:**  
Pretty much, yes. What a great question to get, too, on a gloomy winter day just a few days after the solstice.

I'm not sure if there has been any serious research done on humans and libido fluctuations through the seasons, but because the slightest fluctuations in reproductive capacity can cost high-stakes meat producers serious money, plenty of hormone titers and testicle measurements have been done on bulls and boars and

other large, horned or tusky beasts, and yes, those characteristics do fluctuate with the seasons, and by quite a bit, too. Mostly, though, males get all male-ish during their breeding season, whatever that may be, and one of the most striking differences between ourselves and most of our animal cousins is our lack of an estrus cycle and corresponding male big-balls cycle.

However ... have I got a frolicking animals story for you. It concerns a neuropeptide most excellently named "kisspeptin": "Sex Ends As Seasons Shift and Kisspeptin Levels Plummet." (eurekalert.org/pub\_releases/2006-12/iusea122806.php). Oh, and it's about Siberian hamsters. Kisspeptin (named, as it happens, for the phrase "suppressor sequence," and not for "sealed with a kiss") triggers the release of the important reproductive hormones gonadotropin-releasing hormone and luteinizing hormone, without which we (and the hamsters) would experience neither puberty

nor (in the hamsters at least) libido, nor conception. Hamsters placed in a winter-like environment with short days and low light immediately experience a drop in kisspeptin, and with it the hamster equivalent of mojo workin'. Happily, though, the winterized hamsters were just as sensitive to kisspeptin as the summer hamsters were: as the article I linked emphasizes:

"What is really striking is the disappearance of kisspeptin in animals experiencing winter-like days, yet the ability to respond to kisspeptin when we provide it," said Timothy Greives, lead author of the study. "These data show that the disappearance of kisspeptin in the brain is likely critical in turning off reproduction during winter."

So is kisspeptin supplementation the answer to your problem? Oh, I wish, but hormone feedback loops are way too serious and complicated to mess with when we don't know what we're doing, and in this case we truly haven't the faintest. Plus, seen

any kisspeptin on the supplement shelves recently? So no, of course not, but it's very worth paying attention, I think, to the fact that we are, as you yourself say, "much more attuned to nature than we are generally aware." We might try either adapting to the season by simply expecting less of ourselves and our partners in the depth of winter—a winter break, as it were—or bringing our opposable thumb-having, tool-using human best to bear on the problem. Try (or rather suggest to your friend that he try) light therapy, as prescribed for Seasonal Affective Disorder. And why do you think the mid-winter tropical vacation is so popular? Surely froofy umbrella drinks are available in the frozen north; there must be another, better reason for heading to summery-er climes with your sweetie as the days get short and dark. Failing that, we could do what sensible large fauna (and much flora too come to think of it) do when the weather gets nasty: hibernate.

LOVE, ANDREA

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### VOLUNTEER

Sierra Club Prairie Chapter is looking for a website manager! If you are familiar with website maintenance and have an hour or two a week to contribute, please contact Jessica at jessicaw@sierra-club.ca.

Human Rights Facilitator Training /  
www.jhcentre.org. free 8 week training program presented by: The John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights and the Human Rights City Project.  
Info: Carrie, 453-2638 / E: carrie@jhcentre.org

Little White Schoolhouse is turning 60 next year. If you're interested in being part of a volunteer group for the 60th anniversary please contact Debby Smethurst at 459-1194

Ghost writer needed to help a brain injured woman to write her life story. Listening, writing and computer skills wanted. 2 hrs/wk for 4-6 months. Old Strathcona area. Ellen 432-1137, ext 362

Pilgrims Hospice seeks musical volunteers to lead sing-a-longs and/or to perform for our very forgiving day program clients. Tracy: 413-9801

Become a friend to a new Canadian and share a life-changing experience. Contact Dulari at 474-8554

**Food Not Bombs** Looking for people to help out with cooking and serving of meals every Sunday. Ph 904-8751 or e-m: foodnotbombsedmonton@hotmail.com

**Love Bingo?** Come Volunteer at ElderCare Edmonton. Help raise funds for programs, meals and outings. Call 434-4747, ext. 4

**Tired of Smoking?** Come join us at Nicotine Anonymous. 7pm, Wednesdays at Ebenezer United Church, 163 St, 106 Ave, call Gwynn 443-3020. 7:30pm, Sundays at Henwood Treatment Centre, 18750-18 St, call Ryan 990-8917 or Jo 479-5969.

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Initiative Ambassadeurs pour la Paix is looking for francophone volunteers. Come learn how to present interactive workshops on antiracism/cultural diversity. Karina at (780) 425-4644 ext 9 or kozyszewski@naarr.org

Volunteers are urgently needed to shovel snow for seniors. To register or for more information, call Heather at Westend Seniors Activity Centre, 483-1209

Literacy reading tutors needed to assist adults with disabilities learn basic reading and writing skills. Tutor training, materials and support provided. flex. hrs, 1-2hrs/wk, various locations. Erin 432-1137, ext. 357

Seniors recreation activity aides needed to participate (with crafts, scapbooking, bingo, baking, etc) with disabled female seniors in extended care NE Edmonton. On site support provided. Day/evening 2 hrs/wk. Ellen 432-1137, ext 362

Walking coaches needed for a small group of adults with developmental disabilities every 2nd Fri at Westmount Mall. Erin at 432-1137, ext. 357

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## CLUBS/LECTURES

**ARTS OUTREACH BIG BANDS** MacEwan's Centre for the Arts (497-4303) • For musicians of all levels to play a variety of music • Tue or Wed (7:30-9:30pm)

**AWA 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP** Riverside Presbyterian Church's basement, N. door, 6 Bernard Dr, Bishop St, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert • For adult children of alcoholic and dysfunctional families • Meet each Mon including holidays (7:30pm)

**CANADIAN NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE** 11206-101 St (479-1999) • Basketball; Mon (5-7pm) • Healing Circle; Mon (6-8pm) • Boxing; Mon/Thu (7-9pm), Tue (5-7pm) • Volleyball; Tue (6-8pm) • Sewing Circle; Tue (6-8pm) • Beadwork Class; Wed (6-8pm) • C.N.F.C. Pow-wow; Wed (6-9pm) • Hip-Hop Class; every Thu (5-7pm) • Cree Class; Thu (6-8pm) • Elders and Residency; Fri (all day) • Safe Using and Harm Reduction; last Fri each month (11am-12pm) • Tobacco Reduction; every Fri (1-2pm) • Drop-in Night; Fri (6-8pm)

**HORSE DRAWN WAGON RIDES** The Marketplace at Callingtonwood, 69 Ave, 178 St • Every Sat through December (1-4pm) • Free

**IMAGES ALBERTA CAMERA CLUB** Allendale School, 6415-106 St (469-9776/452-6224) www.imagesab.ca • Meets the 2nd and 4th Thu (8pm) each month featuring presentations, speakers, workshops, outings. Photographers of all levels are welcome

**INTERDISCIPLINARY POLITICAL THEORY GROUP SPEAKERS SERIES** North Campus: Tory Building, Henry Marshall 10-4 (492-0322) • Lecture, *Trauma and Ignorance: Deliberations in Precarious Theorizing* presented by Sharon Rosenberg • Fri, Jan. 11 (3-4:30pm)

**LIVING WITH LOSS** (454-1231) • A presentation of grieving and supporting those who grieve • Tue, Jan. 8 (6:30-8:30pm) at Strathcona Library, 8331-104 St • Wed, Jan. 9 at the Northgate Lions Seniors Centre, 7524-139 Ave

**MEDITATION • Gaden Samten Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society**, 11403-101 St, www.gadensamtenling.org (479-0014) by Kushok Lobsang Dhamchoe; beginner Tue (7pm); intermediate Wed (7pm); advanced Sun (11am-1pm) • **Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization**, 208-10132-105 St (425-1050) www.bkwsu.org; Raja Yoga Meditation • **Tranquility Meditation Tibetan Tradition** 10502-70 Ave (633-6157) www.karmatashiling.org. Beginners welcome, instruction available; Wed (7pm); free

**PARENT TALK** (481-1292) Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton offers support groups and workshops for parents at various city locations

**SELF ESTEEM SUPPORT GROUP** (496-5930) • For women who are experiencing chaos as a result of a life crisis and who feel isolated • Group meets each week

**SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVIE NIGHT** Unitarian Church of Edmonton, Main Hall, 10804-119 St • 4th Fri each month • \$5 donations; pay-what-you-can at the door

**THOUGHTFUL TUESDAY** Steeps Tea Lounge, 11116-82 Ave (988-8105) • Documentary *End of Suburbia* • Tue, Jan. 8 (7pm) • Free

**TOASTMASTERS CLUBS • 'N'orators:** Londonderry Public Library, Londonderry Mall, lower meeting room, 137 Ave, 66 St (476-6963); Wed (7-8:45pm) • **Chamber Toastmasters Club:** Chamber of Commerce, 600, 9990 Jasper Ave (459-5206); Thu (6pm) • **MacEwan:** Grant MacEwan College, Rm 5-238, 10700-104 Ave (633-3921); Fri (noon-1pm) • **Pursuers:** Best Western Cedar Park Inn, 5116 Gateway Boulevard (457-0808); Wed (7-9pm) • **Chamcleor Toastmasters:** Kingsway Rm, Millard Health Building, 131 Airport Rd (498-4608/474-1138) Thu (7-8:30pm) • **Norwood Toastmasters-New location:** Royal Canadian Legion, Kingsway Branch 10425 Kingsway Ave (456-3334) Thu 8-10pm) • **Upward Bound Toastmasters Club:** Norquest College, Rm 601, 10215-108 St (454-3720); every Wed (7-8:45pm)

**TOURETTE SYNDROME** Academy of King Edward, 8525-101 St, North door (1-866-824-9764) • Support meetings for TS adults and parents of TS kids • 1st Wed; Oct-June (7pm)

**WOMEN IN BLACK** In front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil the 1st and 3rd Sat (10-11am) each month, stand in silence for a world without violence

## QUEER LISTINGS

**AFFIRM SUNNYBROOK-RED DEER** Red Deer (403-347-6073) • Affirm welcome LGBTQ people and their friends, family, and allies, meet at Sunnybrook United Church the 2nd Tue (7pm) each month

**ASAPE** Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender differences in education and culture focus group • Contact Dr. Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

**BISexual WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP** http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bwedmonton • Social group for bi-curious and bisexual women • 2nd Thu (7:30pm) each month

**BOOTS AND SADDLES** 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

**BUDDY'S NITE CLUB** 117258 Jasper Ave (488-7736) • Open nightly 9pm-3am, Fri 8pm-3pm • Sun: Rotating drag shows with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair in The Stardust Lounge and GoDivas and Donnatella NE1 in The GoDonna Show; DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Mon: Amateur strip

contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Tue: Free pool and toumey, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Hump day with DJ Sexy Sean • Thu: Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Fri: We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm • Sat: Undie night for men only, free pool and toumey, DJ Arrowchaser

**DOWN UNDER MENS BATH HOUSE** 12228 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Open 24/7 • www.gayedmonton.com

**EDMONTON MUSIC NIGHT** • A mature social group, couples and singles welcome • E-mail edmontonmusic-night@hotmail.com for more info

**EDMONTON PRIME TIMERS (EPT)** Unitarian Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 Street • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common social interests meet the 2nd Sun (2:30pm) of most months for a social period, a short meeting and a guest speaker, discussion panel or a potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month. email edmontonpt@yahoo.ca, www.primetimerswww.org/edmonton

**EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION** www.edmontonrbs.org • Monthly after business mixer. Network and share contacts in the GLBT business community • 2nd Wed each month

**GLBT SPORTS AND RECREATION** www.teamedmonton.ca • Women's Drop-In Recreational Badminton; Oliver School Gym, 10227-118 St (465-3620); Wed (6-7:30pm) • Ballroom dancing; all genders; ballroom@teamedmonton.ca • Bootcamp; St. Alphonsus, 11624-81 St; Mon (7-8pm); bootcamp@teamedmonton.ca • Bowling; Gateway Lanes, 100 3414 Gateway Blvd; Sat (5-7pm); bowling@teamedmonton.ca • Curling with Pride; Granite Curling Club, 8620-107 St; Mon (7:15pm) until Mar. 17, 2008; curling@teamedmonton.ca • Outdoor Pursuits; Ski/Snowboard Trip to Banff and Lake Louise; Jan. 25-27; outdoorpursuits@teamedmonton.ca • Running; Sun, Tue, Thu; running@teamedmonton.ca • Swimming; NAIT pool, 11762-106 St; Tue (8-9pm), Thu (7:30-8:30pm); swimming@teamedmonton.ca • Volleyball; 101 Amiskwacy Academy, Municipal Airport Terminal just off Kingsway; Wed recreational (8-10pm); recvolleyball@teamedmonton.ca; Thu Intermediate; volleyball@teamedmonton.ca • YOGA (Hatha); Free Lion's Breath Yoga; every Sun (2-3:30pm); yoga@teamedmonton.ca

**HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY** 300, 11456 Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hivedmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

**ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB** Woody's, upstairs west of 116 St on Jasper Ave (387-3343) • Crossdressers, transsexuals, friends and supporters http://groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton\_illusions/ • Thu, Jan. 10 (8pm)

**INSIDE/OUT** U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (GLBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Kris (kwellso@ualberta.ca)

**LIVING POSITIVE** 404, 10408-124 St, www.admlivingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Tue (7-9pm): Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

**MADELINE SAMAM FOUNDATION** Faculty St. Jean's, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV-AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) each month • Free (member/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

**MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB** www.geocities.com/makingwaves\_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue, Thu

**PFLAG** Pride Centre, 9540-111 Ave • Support meeting for parents, families and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people • 1st Tue (7pm) each month • Information phone Ruby at 436-1998 after 6pm, or edmontonab@pflagcanada.ca

**PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON** 9540-111 Ave (488-3234) • Open: Mon-Thu 1pm-10pm, Fri 3-10pm • Youth theatre project is developing a play to educate about and reduce homophobic bullying. It's a way for GLBTQ and straight identified youth to address the problem; no previous theatre experience needed. Meetings: Wed (7pm) at the Pride Centre, contact Emily (Emily@pridecentreofedmonton.org, 488-3234) for info • Bears Movie Night: Bears Club; last Sun each month (1-5pm, TV room) • Trans Education/Support Group: Support and education for transsexual, transgendered, intersexed, two-spirited and questioning individuals; 1st, 3rd, last Sun (2-4pm) each month with Cody • Sunday Night Men's Discussion Group: Mens social and discussion group; Sun (7pm); Rob Wells at robwells780@hotmail.com • Friends and Family Playgroup: 2nd Sun (2-4pm) each month with Noelle, friendsandfamilyplaygroup-owner@yahoogroups.ca • Monday Movie Night: Movie nights with themed movies and discussion afterwards; Mon • TTIQ Alliance: Support meeting for transgender, transsexual, intersex and questioning 2nd Tue each month; ttiqalliance@shaw.ca, 718-1412 • GLBT Seniors Drop-In: Thu (2-4pm) with Jeff Boyee, 488-3234 • Sick and tired of being sick and tired? Cocaine Anonymous meeting; Thu 7-8pm; CA Hotline 425-2715 • HIV Outreach: Drop-in circle every other Thu (7pm) • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth support and social group; Sat (7-9pm); yuy@shaw.ca, www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Suit Up and Show Up-Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book Study; Sat (12-1); suitupshowup@hotmail.com • NDP LGBT Caucus: last Sun each month with Jay, 488-3234

**THE ROOST** 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Thu, Sun 8pm-3am; Fri Sat 8pm-4am; closed Mon, Tue, Wed • Thu: Thursdays are Gorgeous with Hostess Hootie McBoob, featuring Drag Kings and Queens, burlesque and amateur strip the last Thu each month • Fri: All Request Dance Party with DJ Jazzy rotating shows every week • Sat: Always like New Year's Eve: with DJ Dan (retro) downstairs and DJ Jazzy (new music) upstairs • Sun: Flashback Sundays: Featuring hostesses Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair, rotating guests. Free pool all night long; \$3

cover • Weekends: \$4 (members)/\$6 (non-member)/Sun \$2 cover • Closing New Year's Day

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH** 11526-76 Ave (436-1555) • People of all sexual orientations are welcome. Sunday worship at 10am

**SINGLE LESBIANS 40 PLUS** • A woman's social group gathers once a month on Sat for conversation over tea and coffee • Information e-mail: singlewomen40plus@hotmail.com

**STEAMWORKS** 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

**WOMONSPACE** (780-482-1794) • A non-profit lesbian organization, organized activities held monthly including licenced non-smoking dances, coffee houses, family events, games nights, golf tournaments and more • www.gaycanada.com/womonspace, e-mail: womonspace@gmail.com

**WOODY'S** 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Tue Karaoke with Tizzy and Patrick • Sat-Sun Pool Tournaments

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**CHURCHILL SQUARE: NIGHTWORKS ON THE SQUARE** • Live music and bands playing at Churchill Square and in surrounding venues. Horse drawn wagon rides, ice skating, bonfire, vendors and concessions. At midnight a thirteen minute display of music, fireworks and light • Mon, Dec. 31

**CHURCHILL SQUARE: MAIN STAGE** • The Wheat Pool's country rock music at 9 pm; Captain Tractor's folk-rock-Celtic-punk music at 9:50 pm; The McDades' Celtic rock music at 10:45 pm • Mon, Dec. 31 (starting 9pm)

**CITY HALL: ACTIVITIES AND CRAFTS** • For families and children at 7 pm. EclectiTrip's eclectic mix of folk, jazz, world and light classical music at 7:00-7:45 pm; Strathcona String Quartet - Chamber Music: Eclectic, Classics and Jazz at 8:00-8:40 pm; singer songwriter Ann Vriand's vocals and piano at 8-8:40 pm; Marco Claveria's Latin/Cuban music at 9:45-10:30 pm; McDonald Broadband rock and roll at 10:45-11:30 pm • Mon, Dec. 31 (starting 7pm)

**STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY** • Activities at 9 pm; Maria Dunn - Country Folk music at 9 pm; Sheri Somerville's jazz fusion at 9:50-10:30 pm; Vissia Sisters folk rock music at 10:45 pm • Mon, Dec. 31 (starting 9pm)

**EDMONTON CITY CENTRE-CBC CENTRE STAGE** • Andrea House's poetic folk music at 9pm; The Uncas' Hilarily "Whiskey Cow Punk" music at 9:50pm; James Murdoch's roots pop music at 10:45pm • Mon, Dec. 31 (starting 9pm)

**HULBERT'S** 7601-115 St (436-1161) • New Year's murder mystery • Mon, Dec. 31 (6:30pm)

**SHERWOOD PARK-BROADMOOR LAKE PARK** Broadmoor Lake Park, Oak Street and Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park, www.strathcona.ab.ca (467-2211) • New Year's Eye Family Festival: Hay rides, music, bonfire, games, skating and tobogganing (weather permitting) starting at 4 pm; fireworks start at 8pm • Dec. 31

## KARAOKE

**BILLY BOB'S SPORTS BAR** Continental Inn, Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Wed (8pm-12am); Thu, Fri, Sat (9:30pm-1:30am); with Right Said Ed

**BLIND PIG** 32 St. Anne Street, St. Albert • Wed/Fri: Karaoke with Shelly

**CASTLEDOWN'S PUB** 16753-100 St • Tue (9pm-1am): with Off-Key Entertainment

**CROWN AND ANCHOR** 15277 Castledowns Rd (472-7696) • Thu (10:30pm) • Wed: Name that Tune

**GAS PUMP** 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Tue (9:30pm): Gord's Best Live Singing Show

**HOOLIGANZ PUB** 10704-124 St (452-1168) • Fri: Karaoke with Krista, Liquid Entertainment

**HAWKEYES TOO** 10044-102 St (421-9898) • Fri (8pm-midnight); Hot Karaoke Productions

**LIONSHREAD PUB** Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway Blvd (431-5815) • Sun (8pm): With Evolution Entertainment

**KNIGHTS PUB SOUTH** 19 Ave, 105 St (461-0587) • Sat (10pm-2am): Gord's Best Live Singing Show

**MAZAROD** 10725-104 Ave (429-4940) • Fri (5pm-late): Karaoke with Chris

**MOJO'S** Best Western Hotel, Fort Saskatchewan (998-7888) • Fri (9:30pm): with Sonia/Prosound Productions

**NEWCASTLE PUB** 6108-90 Ave (490-1999) • Thu: Karaoke

**NIGHTA'S** 10162-100A St (414-0606) • Karaoke Tue and Thu (7pm-12am) with Shelly

**O'CONNOR'S IRISH PUB** 9013-88 Ave (469-8165) • Thu (9pm): Name that Tune

**ON THE ROCKS** 11740 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Karaoke Mon (9:30pm); with Wil Clark and Mr. Entertainment • Thu (9pm): Salsa Rocks

**ORLANDO'S** 1 15163-121 St (457-1649) • Wed/Thu/Sun (9:30pm-2am): with TLC Entertainment

**OVERDRIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD PUB** 6401-104 St (988-5457) • Sat (9pm): Karaoke hosted by Jenny Joy

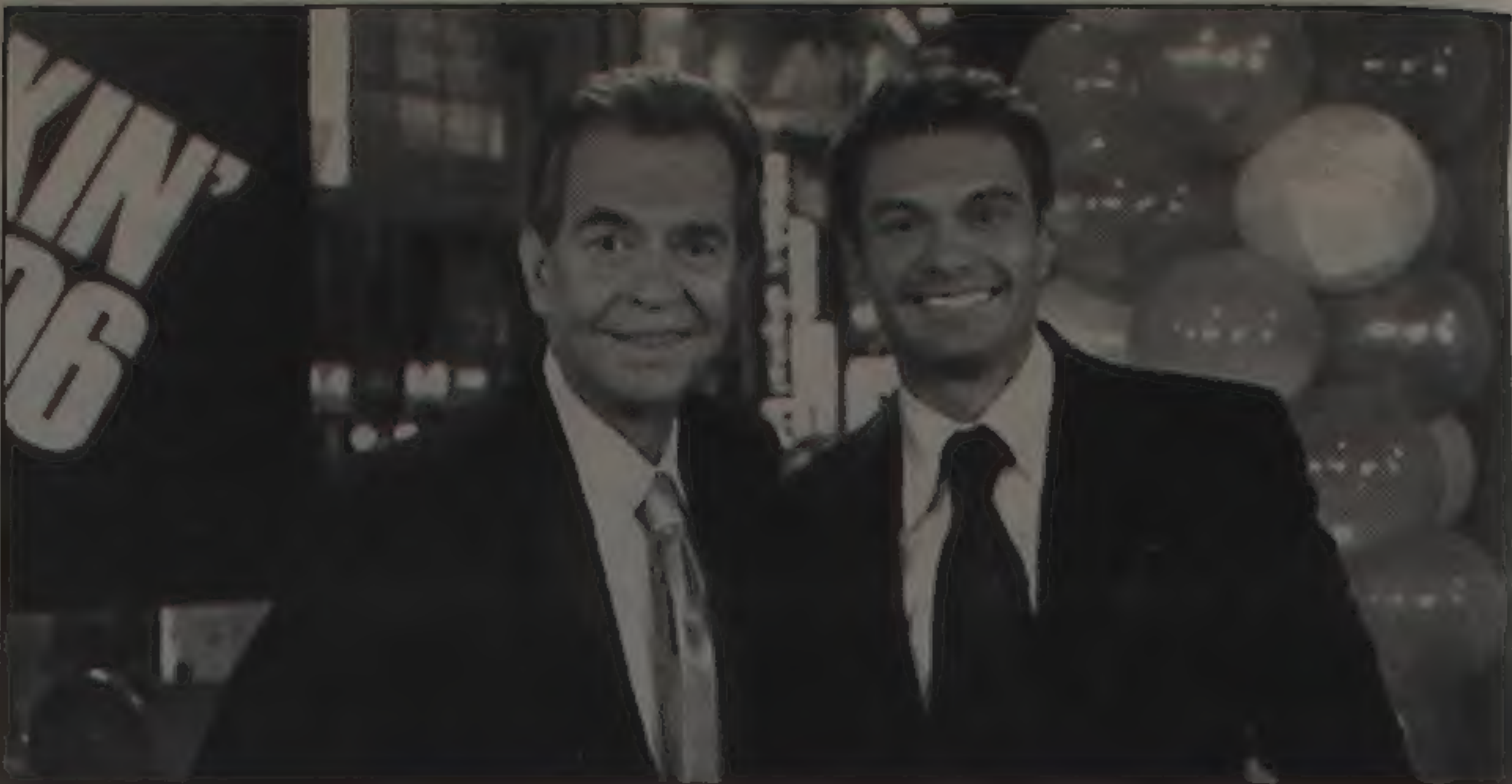
**PEPPERS** Westmont Centre, 114 St, 113 Ave (451-8022) • Thu (9:30pm-1:30am) with Gord from Stonerock

**ROSARIOS** 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Longest running Karaoke bar; 7 days a week

**ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL** • Downtown, 10604-101 St (423-3499) • Mon-Sat (9pm); Sun (7pm): with Ruth • Highstreet, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm) • Old Strathcona, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); Thu-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) • 99 St, 63 Ave; Thu-Sat (9pm-1am); with Off-Key Entertainment

**SPORTSWORLD (INLINE AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO)** 13710-104 St (472-6336) • Tue, Fri-Sat (7pm-midnight); Sat-Sun (1-5pm)

**YESTERDAY'S** 112-205 Carnegie Dr, St. Albert (459-0295) • Thu (9:30pm-2am): with Off-Key Entertainment



# We are like this as the year 2007 becomes 2008

**QUEERMONTON**  
TED KERR  
ted@vueweekly.com

I hope that Hollywood makes a big gay love story where neither one of the lovers dies. Or if not Hollywood, some kid with a video camera. In 2008, I'd like to continue the string of sexy dreams I've been having about Seth Cohen and Summer Roberts. I want to be fisted by Matt Damon. I hope that in 2008, queer kids will hate themselves less. I hope that for us adults, too. I would like to stop checking my email so much.

I would like more people reading about queerness, more understanding of polyamory, winks on the LRT, brave performances and a bathhouse night for women and transpeople. My wish for the queer community in the New Year is a desire to get involved. I foresee people deciding that it's time to pay back; we do this by remembering the obstacles we've overcome and decide to make it easier for the next generation.

I hope that society figures out that all people need access to the basic necessities, regardless of difference or state of health. I want my opinion to exist independent. I want to see the rates of HIV infection go down instead of up. I want to see the world from perspectives other than my own, so that it's upside down, sideways, aslant. And I want to go to Argentina. Viva la Edmonton Queer Renaissance!

My wish is that smart decisions be made about downtown Edmonton, and that the warehouse district becomes a walkable, café-strewn, indie shop-laden maze. Maybe this is too much to ask from a bourgeois urban queer in the throes of a city obsessed with strip malls. I want to be okay with farting in public. I would really like to see the year where there is no need for a pride parade, because we will all be accepted. I want Pizzaway. I want to go to San Francisco.

I want the queer community in Alberta to riot in the streets and reclaim the radical past of the movement for queer liberation NOT assimilation. I wish for queer spaces and queer organizers to lay plans for a rowdy future that is safe and accepting for us while maintaining strong politics, inclusivity, sexual positivity, wicked kink and avid knowledge of queer histories.

As a two-spirit man I would like to see more education done about two-spirit people (even if it has to be me). We are a proud people with a proud

past. I want amazing great people to stop leaving Edmonton.

**TO HAVE** a successful and meaningful resolution to my harassment and discrimination grievance and Alberta Human Rights Commission complaint. To go to the gym more often, to have more sex, to stop trying to make my life take an unnatural shape, to let go but these don't matter because I don't really believe in resolutions. I would like to find out where I don't fit. I'm going to work less, and take more time for my friends, and for nurturing my soul.

I want a job that means more to society than getting somebody their coffee, DVD or jeans ... way more. I wish us a reflective year when we reflect on the decade since our rights to freedom from discrimination became Alberta law, where we see where we have come from, and plan a future where our cultures thrive. I want to see comprehensive sexual health education for all people including sexual minorities.

Resolution: to come to terms with my boyfriend being a transman and accept that I'm still queer, no matter what. To volunteer with Youth Understanding Youth, support Camp Fyrefly, get involved with one of the Team Edmonton sports groups, volunteer or even send story ideas to Gaywire and Queermonton. My wish for 2008 is that the community rallies around itself, support itself, take pride in who we are and help build the institutions needed to provide even the most rudimentary support to our youth and our closeted brothers and sisters.

To mark the 10-year anniversary of the Vriend decision in 2008, the Alberta government officially "write" sexual orientation into the province's human rights statute. I want all schools to be safe for kids to come out in. I want to stop thinking so much. I want them to make an all male version of *America's Next Top Model*. I want a queer bar to open up in Edmonton, not just another gay bar. Edmonton Queers challenge fate: no more hate in 2008!

One night of amazing sex without hearing that nagging inner voice shouting, "be careful, be careful, be careful." I would like to be the voice for the muted. I want to stop trying to find myself and instead just be comfortable being myself.

The above is a collection of queer resolutions, confusions, convictions, fears, needs and hopes. It is an attempt to give voice to our collective identity. It is who we are right now. ♥

**ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)**  
When the Red Hot Chili Peppers released their fifth album, *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*, in 1991, it blasted them into rock stardom. They won a Grammy, had a hit song at the top of the charts, and sold millions of records. Guitarist John Frusciante freaked out at the success. As an indie artist intensely loyal to the underground sensibility, he was embarrassed to be in a band that had mainstream popularity. In the middle of the Chili Peppers' tour, he quit. You may very well have to deal with a comparable development in 2008, Aries. Will you opt to remain low-profile, as Frusciante did, or will you answer the invitation to get more professional?

**TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)**  
When China's Three Gorges Dam finally becomes fully operational in 2009, the hydroelectric power it generates will provide renewable energy to a sizable portion of the population. As a replacement for coal consumption, it will also eliminate 100 million tons of greenhouse gases. That's the good news. The bad news is that it will require a thousand towns and villages to be permanently flooded, forcing over a million people to leave their homes. I believe you may be faced with a comparable option in 2008, Taurus. If you're willing to deal with displacement and the loss of traditions, you will gain access to tremendous reserves

of pure mojo.

**GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)**  
Would you like to own a 60-inch flat-screen HDTV plasma television with surround-sound speakers? How about a \$6000 Daniel Hanson bathrobe made of silk-trimmed pashmina, a diamond-encrusted Cartier Luxury watch, and a heated toilet seat? All of these wonders and more could be within your grasp in 2008. In my astrological opinion, however, going after them would be a waste of your substantial acquisitive potential, which would be better used in pursuit of less decadent valuables. Such as? Such as tools and training that will help you upgrade your skills and refine the unique gifts you have to give the world.

**CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)**  
For millennia, human beings have sought and received help from spiritual beings who are imperceptible to the senses. It's unfortunate that modern Western culture, still in the chokehold of the materialist delusion, makes it challenging for anyone alive today to tap into the supernatural blessings that so many of our forbears enjoyed. But I believe you will be able to overcome this disadvantage in 2008, Cancerian. There's a good chance you will figure out what it takes to establish direct communion with a spiritual ally.

**LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)**  
Picture a full-grown lion with a thin, two-foot-long string tied around one of its back legs. The other end of the string is tethered to a short wooden stake lodged in the dirt. The lion seems to think it's held captive, and never tries to escape.

It's restless and frustrated, periodically emitting a doleful sound that's both a pained growl and a mournful whine. I want you to think of this scene at least once a month in 2008, Leo. Each time, ask yourself, "Am I the lion that Rob Brezsný described?" Make sure you always know that you can snap the string with ease and bound away to freedom.

**VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)**  
The desert-dwelling creosote bush can survive for centuries on little water. In the The hardness of this low-maintenance wonder reminds me of you, Virgo. You sometimes entertain the fantasy that the less you need, the stronger you'll be. The downside of this attitude is that you may unwittingly make it hard for people to give you their gifts. The upside is that you've learned many secrets about how to nurture and take care of yourself. But in 2008, I foresee you making a shift away from the creosote bush metaphor. You're more likely to resemble a tomato bush that gets watered regularly.

**LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)**  
Lake Vostok is as big as Lake Ontario, but no one on earth knew about it until 1996. Scientists who had been drilling through Antarctica's thick sheets of ice discovered it three kilometres below the surface. Here's what they were able to find out about the ancient lake: hermetically sealed off for at least a half million years, it gets no sunlight, has an average temperature below zero, and may harbour life forms as exotic as those on other planets. And yes, it's in a liquid state, for reasons you can read about at [tinyurl.com/2lq79d](http://tinyurl.com/2lq79d).

All that, Libra, is prelude to the following announcement: Lake Vostok will be one of your prime metaphors in 2008. I predict you will dig deep to discover an ancient, pristine mystery at the bottom of your life. In my astrological opinion, you should explore it thoroughly, driven by both an innocent sense of wonder and a robust analytical curiosity.

**SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)**  
You're pretty smart, Scorpio, but would you like to become even smarter in 2008? It's quite possible that you will get more skilled at managing and solving your personal problems. You may also become a better judge of character and develop a brilliant knack for knowing what's good for you. There's one main thing you have to do in order to ensure that you will fully activate these potentials: become more generous. Here's your thought for the year, courtesy of Eleanor Roosevelt: "The giving of love is an education it itself."

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)**  
The number of millionaires on the planet increased more than nine per cent last year. Judging from the astrological omens, I'm betting that the growth rate in the coming year will be similar. A disproportionately large amount of the newly wealthy in 2008, however, will be Sagittarians. And even those of you who don't make it to a million will probably get richer quicker than you have in more than a decade—especially if you make that your intention.

**CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)**  
The Greek philosopher Aristotle said that when new facts and ideas emerge, we

should be willing to coin fresh words to convey the unfamiliar information. Do you agree? If so, be ready to dream up a steady stream of new terms in 2008. I bet you'll encounter more novelty than you have since 1996. Dead language and stale clichés won't be sufficient to wrestle the meaning out of your unprecedented experiences. To jumpstart your receptivity to made-up words, try this one: freakomancy. It refers to the art of divining the future by noticing the most unusual and anomalous elements present in any given situation.

**AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)**  
One of the planet's highest active volcanoes is Mt Cotopaxi in Ecuador. It also happens to be the site of the world's only equatorial glacier. Please visit this complex place sometime in 2008. If that's not possible, at least promise me that you will vividly imagine yourself there. Why? Because in order to bring out the best in yourself in the coming months, I think you will need to be fueled by a visceral sense of what it's like when primal opposites coexist.

**PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)**  
When I first learned about Jupiter in grade school, my science textbook said the planet had 12 moons. Years later, thanks to better telescopes and data returned by America's Voyager spacecrafts, we know that at least 63 moons are orbiting the solar system's largest planet. I expect an equally dramatic expansion will unfold for you in 2008, Pisces. At this time next year, your social network should be much bigger than it is now. You may even be at the center of a Jovian-style web of connections. ♀

ADS! CLASSIFIEDS

IF YOU WANT TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD IN VUE WEEKLY, PLEASE PHONE 426-1996. DEADLINE IS NOON THE TUESDAY BEFORE PUBLICATION

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**Want to stop smoking?** Nicotine Anonymous meetings: 7pm, every Wed, Ebenezer United Church Hall, 106 Ave, 163 St. Contact Gwynn 443-3020.

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**ARTIST/NON PROFIT CLASSIFIEDS**  
Need a volunteer? Forming an acting troupe? Want someone to jam with? Place up to 20 words FREE. Ads more than 20 words are subject to regular price or cruel editing. Free ads must be submitted in writing, in person, fax or e-mail. Free ads will run for four weeks, if you want to renew or cancel please phone Glenys at 426-1996/fax 426-2889/e-m [glenys@vuwweekly.com](mailto:glenys@vuwweekly.com) or drop it off at 10303-108 St. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication. Placement will depend upon available space

**ARTIST TO ARTIST**  
Edmonton Fashion Week seeks models to participate in our annual event. Model Go Sees are to be held on Saturday **Jan. 12**, 12am-1pm at Planet Ze Design, 10055-80 Ave. Check our site at [www.edmontonfashionweek.com](http://www.edmontonfashionweek.com) for info

**Profiles** seeks proposals from artists for exhibition during 2009. **Deadline: Sat, Mar. 22, 2008, 4pm.** Info T: Heidi at 460-4310 or E: [ahfheidi@telus.net](mailto:ahfheidi@telus.net)

Calling all artists 17-20 years old. Are you ready to go public? If you have a unique style you want to get out please contact Steady @ 297-0545.

Junied photography exhibition: **Deadline: Feb. 4, 2008** for exhibition: May 29-June 14, 2008 at TU Gallery. Ph 421-1731 for info

**MUSICIANS**  
Singer looking to start cover band, '80s, '90s and classic rock. Nevada 267-7464

Musician looking to form a band, blues/rock. Please call Wayne between 6-8 pm Mon-Fri 963-6365

Bass player wanted for Dead Man's Train, a new project by former front man of Disciples of Power, Heart Bechmier. Must be willing to relocate to Medicine Hat. +30. Call 403-504-5135.

Drummer and percussionist required for studio sessions. May include some live shows. Must be a quick study and able to work in a variety of genre with multiple artists. Ph: Folker @ 780-757-4928 or [david-folker@msn.com](mailto:david-folker@msn.com)

Rock band looking for smokin' hot lead guitar player. Own equipment, transportation and good attitude a must. Call 998-0567

**SERVICES**  
Pilgrims Hospice Helps Grieving Young People: weekly sessions. Families, schools and agencies. 413-9801 ext 309 to register/info. [www.pilgrimshospice.ca](http://www.pilgrimshospice.ca).

**SACE—Public Education Program:** Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton ([www.sace.ab.ca](http://www.sace.ab.ca)) provides crisis intervention, information, counseling, public education services. For a customized presentation T: 423-4102/F: 421-8734/E: [info@sace.ab.ca](mailto:info@sace.ab.ca); [www.sace.ab.ca/24](http://www.sace.ab.ca/24) Hour Crisis Line: 423-4121

**VOLUNTEER**  
The City of Edmonton Youth Council (CEYC) is recruiting for its 2007-2008 term membership! We are looking for youth aged 13-23, residents in the City of Edmonton, and interested in being involved in civic youth issues. [www.ceyc.ca](http://www.ceyc.ca), Info: Jennifer 496-4938, E: [Jennifer.Wong@edmonton.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Wong@edmonton.ca)

**Be a Big Brother or Big Sister! Be a Mentor! Call Big Brother Big Sister today. 424-8181.** Do you remember someone who believed in you when you were a child? Be that person in a child's life today. All it takes is one hour a week

**HipHopaYouth Group:** looking for creative leaders who want to learn more about liver health. Computer designers, health promoters, public speakers are welcome, we will provide mentoring. Ph Melissa 444-1547

Call 468-7070 to donate today—and help YESS fulfill their mission of giving youth at risk a chance

**Old Strathcona Youth Society:** Looking for volunteers (21+) interested in working with high-risk youth, drop-in setting. Naomi 496-5947, e-m: [osyc@telus.net](mailto:osyc@telus.net)

We believe that all children have a right to grow in families and schools, and that all adults deserve to have real jobs, homes and friends. Ph 454-0701 and help to open the gates to community living in your area

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